



THOUGHT FOR TODAY.

But the sunshine aye shall light
the sky,
As round and round we run;
And truth shall ever come upper-
most,
And justice shall be done.
—Charles Mackay.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY.

Wherever is love and loyalty,
great purposes and lofty souls,
even though in a hovel or a mine,
there is fairyland.—Kingsley.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY.

Good-nature is itself the most
precious gift of Heaven, spreading
itself like oil over the troubled sea
of thought, and keeping the mind
smooth and equable in the rough-
est weather.—Washington Irving.

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Master Fred, Master Fred,
Here's a book to be read;
A thought may you dig out to coddle,
If you do, Master Fred,
Let it enter your head,
And live for all time in your noddle.
Uncle Os and Aunt Ric
April 4, 1905.

YOUR BIRTHDAY READING

FOR APRIL 4.

These folk have the qualifications for artistic work, but although they may familiarize themselves with the rules of art it does not follow that they will be guided by them. They are impulsive and need to guard against allowing themselves to suffer through the intensity of their nervous feelings. They are sociable beings, but want to be surrounded by intelligent people. They are great readers, and are generally fond of occult and mysterious subjects. They aspire to achieve great things, but are too easily liable to be turned from a good purpose under discouragement and become despondent.

Planets: Mars and Neptune.

Astral colors: White and rose pink.

Gems: Amethyst and diamond.

Celebrities of the day: Thaddeus Stevens of Vermont; Prof. George P. Baker of Harvard.

Benjamin—This boy is very ambitious. He has excellent judgment, never acts from impulse. He is inclined to doubt that there is such a thing as affection. He lacks in determination. He should have his will power increased in some way. He will travel a great deal and take several long journeys. He has executive ability, is full of enthusiasm, but the enthusiasm is somewhat effervescent and needs to be rekindled often.



"DIDN'T I TELL YOU SO?" SAID WILLIE.

PAGE 68.

THE DIVIDING OF THE WAYS.

BY

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THE DIVIDING OF THE WAYS.

CHAPTER I.

A TEMPERANCE MEETING.

THE great hall was crowded to its utmost capacity, and the platform was filled by men well known in the ranks of reformers. A distinguished advocate then in the zenith of his popularity was to speak ; and those who turned away unable to gain admission, far outnumbered the more fortunate ones who, by early coming, had secured seats.

A gospel temperance meeting ! This certainly was something new, and the crowds who are always ready to follow a new sensation were fully awake to this.

“Look at the blue ribbons. They are so plentiful that they remind me of the violet-dotted meadow in the springtime near my boyhood home. And see what a crowd of people, made up of all classes. There are my friend

Platte's two fine boys, with that nice young girl—their governess. And just beyond them is the dissipated young lawyer who donned the blue ribbon last night. There are crowds of people, too, from the slums, all wearing the blue ribbon, do you see? Truly, it seems as if old Alcohol's reign is ended."

"I see it all, my friend, and I rejoice in it all," replied the venerable man to whom he spoke. "I fully believe in the final victory of the right; but we have need of patience. You remember the Washingtonian movement, and how confident we were?"

"Yes," replied Judge Silverton, "and that movement, named for the Father of his Country, accomplished great good. But this is Gospel Temperance, don't you see? In the name of the Great Father. How can He fail?"

"He cannot, yet there is a human side to it, you know."

And the "human side" seemed, as the speaker went on with his address, to be in such perfect accord with the Divine, that the glow on the venerable faces which adorned the platform seemed a lambent light. Oh, the power of eloquence devoted to the cause of humanity! How it sways and determines the halting,

wavering purposes standing at the dividing of the ways! How it reaches beyond even to the downward way, rescuing those who are ready to perish! Such was the work done that night. Only eternity will reveal its results. As the speaker closed his address of impassioned eloquence, he pointed to the table on which the pledge—"the declaration of independence"—was lying, and invited "all who were free, or would be free from the dominion of the tyrant, to write their names. In union lies strength, and together they would overcome the destroyer, and rescue his victims."

How they crowded around the table, and how diverse were the signatures on roll and pledge card, with "God helping me" as its strength! There was the gracefully flowing hand; the cramped, irregular hand; and the child's ambitious hand, all expressing the same thought—"Death to King Alcohol." Among the signatures, in a fair, round hand, was "Walter Platte," and beside it, in delicate chirography, "Anna Harmon," the governess. Willie Platte shook his head when Walter said, as he tied on his blue ribbon, "Come, now, Willie."

"Not to-night, I think," he answered, and two fair boys—brothers, standing at the divid-

ing of the ways that night, chose each a separate path.

The thought in Willie's mind was, "Papa has plenty of choice wines in his cellar, and he sometimes gives them to his friends. They are gentlemen, and I mean to be one. If it were wrong, they would not drink wine. And besides, I like it. I've tasted of that which they left in the glasses, and it is good. It is silly to deny myself of a good thing."

Poor Willie !

He did not realize that to shun the evil, and to "cleave to that which is good," is the only real liberty and happiness.

Mrs. Platte smiled when she saw the blue ribbon on the breast of Walter, and nodded approvingly.

"But where is your badge, my boy?" Mr. Platte said to Willie. "You belong to the violet brigade, of course?"

"No," Willie answered proudly, "gentlemen drink wine, and I mean to be a gentleman. Besides, I like it."

Mr. Platte looked shocked at this frank avowal.

Could it be possible that his son, so carefully trained and guarded, who seemed almost a Christian, had learned to love the rosy wine? His face was almost stern as he said :

"I am sorry to hear you say that, Willie. I did not know you had ever tasted wine."

"Gentlemen sometimes leave some in their glasses, and boys like to know," said Willie, "and then it is only the low, vicious people that drink too much. Of course, I never mean to do that."

"Oh, Willie, you forget the grand, good man, Governor Yates. Wine destroyed him," said Walter, "and Alexander, we thought him such a hero. He conquered the world, but wine slew him."

"Where did you learn this, my boy?" said Mr. Platte with a half smile.

"Miss Harmon read it to us out of her books," said Walter eagerly. "She reads and studies a great deal, and one day she read to us about Bucephalus. Oh, it was a beautiful story. King Philip, Alexander's father, had a present of a fine horse which every one admired, but no one dared go near him, he was so fiery and fractious, and Philip began to be angry at the giver. Then Alexander, who had been carefully watching him, saw that it was his shadow that the horse was afraid of, and he sprung upon his back and let him run toward the sun, and cheered and praised him, and by and by he came 'round to where his father was standing, and the horse was conquered."

"Very well told, my boy," said Mr. Platte. "Walter will be the historian in our family, my dear."

"But, papa, that wasn't all. Alexander conquered the world in twelve years, and then"—the bright face grew clouded as he went on, "he died in a drunken revel."

"How shameful, and he so young," said his father.

"But that wasn't the worst of it all," said Walter. "He offered prizes to the men who would drink the most wine, and forty men drank so much that they died. And he drank all night. Then his friends said, 'Let's begin again,' and he said 'Yes,' and filled up his great Hercules cup, and commenced to drink again. But he sunk down all in a heap, and that was the way Alexander died."

Willie's face was not at all serene.

"Because Alexander made a fool of himself, others needn't," he said.

"But, if we never taste of wine, it can't hurt us," said Walter, "and I never mean to—never."

After the boys had left the room, Mr. Platte said to his wife, "That boy Walter is a genius, my dear. His memory is wonderful. He'll make his mark in the world."

"He is the most conscientious child I ever

saw," said the mother. "The first question with him is, 'What is right?' and once convinced he chooses that and nothing can move him. When you are away, dear, I sometimes ask him to say grace, and the earnest little prayer he offers almost brings tears to my eyes. He is a true Christian, I believe, young as he is, and I fear sometimes——"

"Oh, no, dear. I know what you were about to say; but who ever saw a finer or more robust little fellow? We will not borrow trouble."

"No; and how thankful I am for our dear boys; I tremble under the responsibility sometimes. It is such a trust! Immortals to be trained, and to our hands is given, perhaps, the shaping of their future. I try to make them happy at home, and they are, I think. Well, I'll do the very best I can, and ask the dear Father to guide their innocent feet. It is such a rest when I think of Walter, dear boy."

"If they do choose the wrong path, it will not be their mother's fault. And," he continued, hesitatingly, "if dear Willie has learned to love wine by sipping the drainings of the glasses on his father's table, we had better banish it from the table, henceforth."

Mrs. Platte made no reply at first. Her eyes

filled with tears as she pressed her lips to her husband's forehead, murmuring :

“Thank you, dear. I am so glad.”

Then she said :

“The beginnings are what I fear most of all. Oh, if Willie would choose the right always, as Walter does. He is so kind and generous, but I want him to be pure and true.”

CHAPTER II.

A SUNNY HOME.

A GOLDEN-HAIRED child, with sunny blue eyes and bright, smiling face, was seated beside a table on which were books, a box of varicolored material, and bunches of natural flowers, but the white fingers were resting now, and busy thought was at work.

"It is such a beautiful world, and I am so happy, if only I were of any use in the world," was her thought. What was there in her surroundings to call forth the happy smile always resting on her face, which had given her the sobriquet of "little Sunshine"? She was sitting just outside the door of a tidy-looking room in one of those stately down-town mansions which had been long since relegated to the class-tenement houses. Beside her lay a pair of crutches, but above her was the blue sky.

"How nice it is to have such a big, beautiful piece of blue sky to look up to, and then Miss Meek's lovely garden down there." And she

leaned forward to inhale the fragrance of mignonette and heliotrope from below.

Rose Harmon had a habit of talking to herself, as she was quite alone from early morning till twilight, and had no one else to talk to. She was such a bright, sensible little body, that it would have been hard to have found a better companion. "Miss Meek's lovely garden" was the small enclosure at the back of the basement, which the seamstress rented for a home for herself and her aged mother.

It had a real home atmosphere about it too, and the little garden was filled with treasures of old-fashioned flowers.

Every square foot of earth was utilized. There were pinks, poppies, pansies, and gay nasturtiums climbing the wall to get out of the way of the flaunting hollyhocks which filled a corner. Heliotropes and roses, too, were there. These were grandma's favorite flowers, and sitting in her great easy-chair among them, the old lady seemed to be carried back to the garden of her country home. No wonder that Rose Harmon, sitting on "the extension" of the floor above, loved to look down upon this pretty picture; and no wonder that every day clusters of the fragrant beauties found their way up to the little crippled girl with the shining eyes.

These the little one copied with rare skill, and this was one of the rays which cheered the path of the little lame girl.

She never looked at the unsightly lines of flapping clothes which often extended from the windows on every side; for when her beautiful patch of blue sky was obscured, she turned to her flowers.

Then there was the nightly home-coming of the dear mother from her stand on the avenue, where she sold coffee, biscuits, and cakes of her own making. There were fruits and candies, too, and sometimes she sold the pretty bunches of flowers which Sunshine made, and which only seemed to lack perfume. Brother Jamie, too, was another ray,—Jamie who worked so faithfully “to help mother” at whatever he found to do; selling papers when not running of errands for the great business house near her stand.

The evenings were all their own. They read and studied, and had “the grandest company in the world,” Jamie said, for Anna had liberty to take them what books she chose from the large library at the Platte mansion.

was ray number two, and a broad ray it was, brightening the lowly home most delightfully.

Then the occasional home-coming of dear sister Anna, the governess, and the pretty stories she told them about her young pupils. They learned to love the pure, upright Walter, and to admire the manly Willie.

This ray was very bright, for love reigned in the pleasant, though lowly, home.

But the brightest beams of all came from the family Bible and the altar of prayer which diffused its hallowed influences not only through the house, but through the hearts that went forth to life's daily battle, as well as that of the little child who stayed patiently at home.

"If I were of any use in the world!" little Sunshine had often said in her talks with herself.

She did not know how the sight of her bonny face brightened the days of the two lone women in the basement, or how the songs she was always singing,—homely, old-fashioned songs they were,—cheered their hearts and lifted them toward heaven.

Her mother had learned those songs in her childhood, and had taught them to her little ones.

Little Sunshine often sang—

"There 's a happy land,
Far, far away,

Where saints in glory stand
Bright, bright as day.
Oh, how they sweetly sing
Glory to the Saviour King,
Loud let His praises ring,
Praise, praise for aye."

And her bird-like voice lent a new sweetness to the cheering words.

There were other listeners than the Meeks'.

Rose had often seen a sad-faced woman in the area adjoining the pretty garden, and had tossed leaflets, and sometimes a bunch of the flowers with which she was so generously supplied, over into the enclosure.

They were always carefully picked up, she did not see by whom. Neither did she know that the sad-faced woman was the wreck of a once beautiful and fashionable society leader. Sunshine little dreamed how eagerly she listened, as she had never listened to the most brilliant opera, to

"Bright in that happy land
Beams every eye,
Kept by a Father's hand,
Love cannot die."

"The angel!" she moaned. "But I—I have forsaken my Father and scorned His love. Oh, if I could return to Him!"

Was it accident that the very next melody

the singer warbled was that plaintive old song, "The Prodigal's Return"?

The look of hopeless misery left the wan features, and tears fell like rain, while she sought the only Book which could give her hope—the Book neglected for long years while she had been madly pursuing the way of death.

To the aged woman in the garden the message of the song was sweeter.

"These faded eyes shall shine again when I reach that happy place," she murmured; and her daughter said:

"There the weary shall find rest forevermore."

To be, seems so much smaller and more inefficient than to do, in this busy, bustling world, that many are disheartened, and think their lives are useless, yet the little lame girl in the tenement-house was witnessing as truly for the Master as any missionary in foreign lands.

Willie and Walter Platte were out with their governess for their morning walk.

"Who was that newsboy who lifted his cap to you so politely, Miss Anna?" said Willie. "He looked like a gentleman."

"He is the beginning of a gentleman," said Miss Harmon, laughing. "That is my brother, James Harmon."

“Why doesn’t he come to see you? I should like to know him,” said Willie.

Miss Harmon did not try to enlighten her young charge on social distinctions. She said simply, “Jamie is busy every day. He does all he can to help mother.”

“And have you any more nice brothers?” queried Walter.

“No, Walter; Jamie is all I have. He and mother and little Sunshine make up the family.”

“Little Sunshine? That’s a gay name. I like it,” said Walter.

“But that is only our pet name for her. She is so happy and sunny,” said Miss Harmon. “Her real name is Rose, and she is lame. She injured her foot two years ago, and she has gone on crutches ever since.”

“I should like to see her,” said Willie, gravely.

He remembered his own fretfulness and impatience when he had so much for which to be thankful.

“Please, Miss Anna, may we go and see her sometime?”

“If mamma is willing,” Miss Harmon replied. “But she is always alone through the day.”

“Alone all day and lame, and—and happy!” said Willie.

“What makes people happy, Willie?”

“Oh, Miss Anna, that is a hard question. I used to think it was having everything you wanted, but now I know that isn't it. One is always wanting something else.”

“Yes, Willie, and one is not satisfied then. I was reading the other day the life of the great German poet Schiller, and I read, in his own words, that the world had always thought him happy because he had fame and fortune, and all worldly pleasure, yet though all this was true, he never, in the seventy-five years he had lived, had known two weeks of real enjoyment.”

Rose Harmon, singing at her work, was surprised a few days later by three visitors.

She was delighted to see sister Anna, but a little shy when Willie and Walter Platte were introduced to her.

All this, however, quickly wore away, for her young visitors were so polite, and so genuinely interested in her work that little Sunshine was soon herself again.

She took them out on “the extension,” where her happiest hours were spent, and they looked down into the bright garden and admired the gay flowers, saying nothing about the beautiful conservatory at home, though in the frequent

visits which followed, Rose Harmon came to believe it a veritable paradise.

"How nice the old lady looks with her knitting among the flowers," said Willie. "Such happy-looking old people are handsome, I think."

"So do I," said Rose. "She is happy, too, because she is so good, and she sends me all the pretty flowers as soon as they peep out."

"Is that what makes people happy, because they are good?" queried Willie.

"I don't know, I think so; but then I am very happy, and that can't be the reason. Oh, I know," she added hastily: "it is because everybody is so good to me, and God is so good, and everything He has made is so beautiful."

This, then, was the secret of little Sunshine's happiness.

It was a happy hour she spent chatting gaily with her young visitors, and then Anna said:

"I am going to take your visitors around to mother's stand and give them a little treat. I wish you could go too, darling."

"Oh, I've had my treat," said Rose with a beaming face. "It was so nice for you all to come and see me. Won't you come again?"

"I thank you, we should like to," said gallant Willie, whose better self was all awake to-day.

Standing around Mrs. Harmon's table a little later, regaling themselves on delicate cakes and chocolate creams, he said :

"This has been a jolly treat, Miss Anna. Thank you very much for bringing us here."

"You are kind to say so, Master Willie," said Mrs. Harmon, giving each a plate of delicious fruit. "And I am very glad to see the young gentlemen refuse coffee. The hard-working men who go early to business, need it, and I think, Anna, that it keeps many away from the saloons."

"I do not doubt it, mother dear, and I hope some one will keep up your stand when you leave it. It is the best kind of a temperance argument."

"Why will your mother leave her nice business?" said Willie on the way home. "It is just the jolliest kind of a place."

"I suppose all honest work is respectable," replied Miss Harmon, slowly, "but you know how sweet home is, and mother would enjoy the quiet and rest so much. Just as soon as she is able, she means to go back to her old home, to the pretty village where her happiest hours were spent, and, where—my father is buried."

There was a little break in her voice as she said this, and Walter, whose hand she held,

pressed it silently, feeling that there was a grief below these words, of which he knew nothing.

Willie, more thoughtless, rattled gaily on :

“ You never told us you had such nice people, Miss Anna. Why didn't you ? And they're almost as nice as you. Will you tell us about your father ? ”

“ This is such a bright day, and the story is too sad,” said Anna. “ Some day I will tell you.”

CHAPTER III.

WHAT THE LAWYER SAID.

IN the luxurious library of the Platte mansion, its owner sat with a friend, a distinguished lawyer from a Western city, discussing the topics of the day. He rang the bell, and to the servant who appeared at the door, he said :

“James, bring me a bottle of that old wine.”

The man’s countenance fell, but he bowed and silently withdrew.

“I want you to taste of some particularly fine sherry I have, Connel,” Mr. Platte said, “for I know you are a connoisseur. The fact is, my fine stock of old wines gives me no pleasure. I have two boys : the one says he will not sign the temperance pledge because he loves wine, and means to drink like a gentleman ; the other is a staunch temperance boy ; and really, I feel more comfortable about him than the first. I never have wine on the table now, for there is always a beginning, you know. Think of the young men from our first families, who are already lost beyond redemption.”

The butler had come in with the wine and was standing silently beside him.

"You may go now, James," he said kindly, and the man withdrew.

"Poor fellow ; he is faithful as the day, but he hates wine as much as little Walter does," Mr. Platte continued ; "but as I was saying, when I look at those dissipated young fellows, I tremble, and think James may be right, after all. One cannot be too careful."

Mr. Connel was watching the light which came through the ruby wine which he held in his hand.

"True," he answered. "I'm glad I haven't any boys. If I had, I would sooner choose a dead son than a drunken one. When once the habit is fastened, there is so little hope."

"And who knows when the dead line will be reached?" said Mr. Platte, his glass still untasted on the table before him.

"Who knows?" said Mr. Connel in a musing tone. "Yet, who dares antagonize the interests of the liquor traffic? It represents billions of money. It dominates the Government as well as individuals. In politics it is king. Neither party dare resist its demands, and both bow obsequiously to its mandates. It is appalling to think of the crime, poverty, and death

for which it is responsible. And the horrible waste! Think of nine hundred millions expended every year for drink. It would afford homes for all the poverty-stricken families in the nation. And then to think of the slain, thousands upon thousands, who every year lie down in drunkards' graves."

"And these are your sentiments, Connel? It is awful, indeed."

"These are facts which I cannot ignore," he replied, placing his untasted glass on the table. "Shakespeare was right when he called the invisible spirit of wine, devil, and I believe that man was a base slanderer who put that sentiment concerning wine, woman, and song, into Luther's mouth."

"Even if he did say it, it only proves that a good and great man can say a foolish thing," said Mr. Platte, smiling.

But Mr. Connel went on, in the same grave tone :

"I wonder often what the outcome will be with this nation. We are in a struggle with the giant liquor traffic, and it is for life. Which will conquer?"

"We will, individually at least," said Mr. Platte, as he rang for the butler to remove the wine

James' countenance wore an entirely different expression as he came to take away the wine.

"There isn't a drop gone," he said, as he restored it to its case in the cellar. "If master would just clear the cellar of the wicked stuff!"

Meanwhile Miss Anna, in the discharge of her duties, had made a sad discovery.

Hidden away in a corner of Willie's desk, she found a package of cigarettes, with a vile picture attached. She burned both, immediately, but her heart was sorely troubled.

Could the bright, manly Willie be guilty of disobedience and deceit?

She came across a little sketch which she chose for the reading lesson for the day, and asked Willie to read it.

"A missionary found a cobra hiding under the rose-bushes, which his wife had tended daily. It was coiled up snugly at the bottom of its hole, and every day the children had played around the place and had not been harmed. He brought his gun and shot the reptile, thankful that he had found it."

"It was a narrow escape, for the bite is deadly," said Miss Harmon, but there are worse cobras in America."

"Oh, Miss Anna!" exclaimed Willie.

"True," she said; "that only killed the body but these destroy body and soul."

She turned her eyes toward the window, and went on quietly: "If one should chance to find hidden away among good, helpful books, a vile picture, which would stain the soul of whoever looked upon it, what should one do?"

"I would put it in the fire," said Walter earnestly.

Willie with a scarlet face was bending intently over the book he held, while Miss Anna went on.

"The safe way would be to kill every cobra we find, if we are able. The poison cigarette cobra is one of the most dangerous. Fathers would not forbid the use of cigarettes did they not know how deadly they are, how many die from their poison, or are physically wrecked for life."

"Are cigars as bad, Miss Anna?" Walter asked.

"Not so bad, but bad enough," she answered. "The West Point examinations show that many of the candidates have the disease known as 'tobacco heart.' They fail, of course, and from the hospitals come such sad reports. Bright, beautiful boys die in the morning of life from this baleful habit."

"Isn't wine a cobra too, Miss Anna?" said Walter.

"Yes, Walter; 'at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder,' the Bible says, you know. How much wiser it is to choose the path which 'shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' There are no cobras in that path."

"Am I in it? I should like to be," said Walter.

"I ask myself that question often," said Miss Harmon. "Then I take the Bible and find, 'Whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.' Everything which is beautiful and true, you see, is in this way. And if we only love God, the way is so easy and pleasant. For He is our helper, and, working with Him, we grow like Him. But, deary me, I've given you a sermon, and nothing was further from my thought."

"I like it, anyway," said Walter. "Isn't it beautiful to have God for our friend and to love what He loves? If I only knew——"

"Knew what, dear boy?"

“Knew that I am a Christian, Miss Anna; that I love God.”

“Do you know if you love your father and mother, Walter?”

The boy's face brightened, but Willie turned away. Such talk was distasteful to him. Before him was the choice which God has given to every human being. Walter seemed almost instinctively to choose the right way, and he was a happy-hearted little fellow whom everybody loved, and no one doubted that he had chosen “the good part which should never be taken from him.” But Willie—bright, handsome, generous, and full of noble impulses—was yet as restless as the troubled sea. He did not deliberately choose the evil, yet he stood long at the dividing of the ways. He had not the moral courage of Walter, though conscience told him that his little brother always chose the right. His weekly visits to Miss Anna's home made the conflict more severe. The bright, sunny-hearted little Rose was a constant reproach to him. The flowers he brought her from the conservatory made her happier than he was with all his luxurious surroundings. Crippled though she was, she kept pace with him in all his studies, and indeed went ahead of him, for she read and enjoyed books far beyond

him. She seemed so happy in doing what he found most irksome. Her affliction, so bravely borne, made her all the more interesting, and every time he saw her he said :

“If she could only walk again, and I do believe she will.”

CHAPTER III.

MISS ANNA'S STORY.

MISS HARMON'S young pupils did not venture to remind her of the promise she had made, though both were anxious to hear about the father whose story was so "sad."

The rain was pouring dismally, and, their study hours over, the two boys sat looking out of the window disconsolately.

"No going out to-day," said Willie. "I wonder if little Sunshine can find anything jolly in such a day?"

"She seems to be always happy," said Miss Anna. "Suppose I tell you the story you asked for the other day?"

"Oh, do," said Willie eagerly.

"If it won't make you feel bad," said thoughtful Walter.

Miss Harmon bowed her head for a moment, then she said resolutely:

"Yes, I will tell you the story. You know how beautiful the country is, even when the rain

comes pouring down. It makes all so fresh and bright. Our home with its lovely lawn and garden was on the banks of a rugged little stream which was always musical and sometimes terrific. You could not see the village, for the spur of a hill covered with trees came down close to the house and hid us in the cosiest corner, but you had only to cross a bridge and turn down the street to find yourself amid great manufactories and such busy crowds of people. But though our noisy stream supplied the motive power, the babel did not reach us. It was all so quiet and sweet. The birds sang there all the day long, and we had the music of the brook, and we were very happy."

"I wish I could see it," said Walter. "How nice it must have been."

"Yes, my dear father thought so. He was quite a genius, and had made many valuable inventions which were highly spoken of by the leading scientific journals. But his heart was affected, and the doctor said that he must have absolute quiet if he hoped to live. Cruel men had wronged him and robbed him of the fruit of his years of work and study. But he was happy in our village home. He had a building on the bank of the brook where he could work on his beloved inventions, and my mother shielded him so care-

fully from all that could trouble him. We were all so happy because he seemed well, and we thought perhaps the doctors were mistaken. Just at dusk one summer's day he said to my mother :

“ ‘The mail is in. I'll walk down to the office for my evening papers.’ ”

“His words caused a chill to come over her, and she said, hastily :

“ ‘Don't go down to-night. Let some one go for you, please.’ ”

“ ‘Oh, you spoil me by such careful watching,’ he answered with a laugh. ‘Don't you see how well I am ?’ ”

“And he went down the street with a firm, strong step, while mother tried to school herself for her unreasoning fears.

“There was a saloon between our house and the post-office, though none of us gave it a thought, for no one we knew frequented it. But we can never forget it now.”

Willie and Walter listened with wide-open eyes. Could it be that the cobra which they had been talking about had stung Anna's father, and was this why she hated it so ?

She went on in a low voice :

“Only a few minutes later we saw men coming over the lawn bringing some one in their

THE OLD WATER WHEEL.

It lies beside the river, where its marge
Is black with many an old and carless barge.
And yeasty filth and leafage wild and rank
Stagnate and batten by the crumbling bank.

Once, slow revolving by the industrious mill,
It murmured—only on the Sabbath still;
And evening winds its pulselike beating bore
Down the soft vale and by the winding shore.

Sparkling around its orbed motion, flew,
With quick fresh fall, the drops of dashing dew,
Through noontide heat that gentle rain was flung,
And verdant, round, the summer herbage sprung.

Now, dancing light and sounding motion cease,
In these dark hours of cold continual peace;
Through its black bars the unbroken moonlight flows,
And dry winds howl about its long repose!

And moldering lichens creep, and mosses gray,
Cling round its arms, in gradual decay,
Amidst the hum of men—which doth not suit
That shadowy circle, motionless and mute!

So, by the sleep of many a human heart
The crowd of men may bear their busy part,
Where withered, or forgotten, or subdued,
Its noisy passions have left solitude:—

Ah! little can they trace the hidden truth,
What waves have moved it in the vale of youth!
And little can its broken chords avow
How once they sounded. All is silent now!

—John Ruskin.

Wheat—10c

Enticing Foods Existence

oods — giant grains puffed to
el size. Porous, crisp and digest-
esome, most delicious form in
were served. Please try them.

The Lunch Room Test

We make all sorts of cereals, as most
people know. So we are entirely unbiased.

We care little which food is the favorite,
but we want to know which one is.

So we maintain in New York, a lunch room
where hundreds of people lunch daily. There
we serve all cereals, at one uniform price,

arms. It was my dear father. A paroxysm more terrible than any he had ever experienced had come upon him and he seemed like one dead. My mother did not cry out, but her face was pitiful to see, as she flew about under the doctor's directions, doing all in her power for the sufferer. At last he opened his eyes and they fell upon one of the men who had brought him in.

“‘You have given me my death-blow, Jerry,’ he said, faintly.

“‘Oh, Mr. Harmon, forgive me; ’twas the drink that did it. God knows I wouldn’t have harmed you for the world,’ sobbed the man who in his drunken fury had attacked the first man he saw after coming out of the saloon.

“It was so dark he did not even know whom he had struck, but when he saw him fall he was instantly sobered, and had assisted in bringing him to his home.”

Miss Anna could not proceed for emotion, and kind-hearted Walter came over to her side and put his little arm protectingly around her.

“It was one of the dreadful cobras that did it,” he said, “and Tom Fitzallan said that I was a fool to sign the pledge, and ‘liquor wouldn’t hurt anybody if they let it alone,’ and that isn’t true.”

“No, it isn’t true. My father ‘let it alone,’

yet it caused his death and left us fatherless. My dear mother, too, learned some sad lessons about poor human nature. A gentleman, a wealthy manufacturer, had always professed great interest in my father and his work, and was testing some of his inventions which had not yet been patented. My mother thought him a man of honor, and that he would surely allow her something for the invention which was bringing him in large profits. So she went to his place. He received her politely. He was smoother than oil, but would not allow that she had any claim upon him. She knew about the work done by the machine which my father was soon to have patented, and pointed it out to him. But it was all useless. Only a suit at law could decide the matter, and my mother had a horror of a lingering lawsuit, so she gave it all up, and years of my father's study and labor went to enrich another."

"I hate that man," said Walter.

"I do not; I pity him," said Miss Anna, kissing the flushed cheek. "Don't you know the Bible says, 'He that sinneth, wrongeth his own soul,' and this man wronged his soul cruelly. He reduced the wages of his workmen, building a beautiful church with the gains.

"The papers were full of his name and of his

great benevolence. But the church burned, and he rebuilt it. Then the wave of praise and adulation rose still higher, and he fancied himself a happy man. But lightning struck this second temple, and I sometimes think his conscience awoke. He certainly was a haggard, unhappy-looking man when I last saw him, though known as a great philanthropist. And I would rather be in my poor mother's place, selling fruits and coffee, than in his, with what he knows about himself."

Willie sat with his face buried in his hands.

This, then, was the sting that took all the brightness out of life—self-knowledge.

"And if a fellow tries to do the right thing and knows it, what other people say won't hurt him," he thought.

There was a tap on the door and Mr. Platte stood before them.

"The rain is over," he said, "and my friend, Dr. Windom, has promised to drop in and see if anything can be done for the little lame girl you told me about, Willie. So if you and Miss Harmon will show us the way, we will go down this afternoon."

It was Miss Anna's turn to be agitated now. Several physicians had examined the case and failed to give relief, and all had given up the

hope that she would walk again. And little Sunshine had said, "Don't feel bad, for my foot doesn't pain me so very much, and then I have such nice crutches, and every one is so good to me."

"Now the great Dr. Windom was going to look into the case, and who knows?"

She did not dare to go farther, but turned to Willie: "My dear, noble boy," she said, "I thank you so much for this."

"Me?" said Willie, innocently. "I don't see why?"

The little girl, sitting singing at her work, as usual, looked up to see dear sister Anna and Willie Platte enter with two strange gentlemen.

There was a flush on the usually pale cheek as she looked inquiringly at her sister, who said:

"This is Willie's papa, Rose—Mr. Platte, and this is his friend, Dr. Windom. He will look at your poor foot, and perhaps he will find out the trouble."

Rose turned very pale, and when she tried to speak, her voice failed.

"It is hard," said Dr. Windom kindly. "I know how much little girls love the fresh air and the sunshine, and you are a prisoner."

"Oh, no,"—Rose had found her voice now—"I sit in the sunshine always, and I have my pretty work, and——"

"Yes, I see," said the doctor, taking up a rose, which was fashioned so delicately that it seemed real. "You are a little artist; but we doctors like to see little feet doing the work they were made for."

He examined the crippled foot so carefully that Rose did not wince till he pressed suddenly upon a part that caused her to quiver with pain.

"We have found the mischief, I think," he said, brightly.

"Now, Miss, stand upon your feet."

Rose reached down for her crutches.

"On your feet, I said," and he took the crutches away.

Bewildered, yet smiling, she rose, and oh, joy! she stood firmly on the foot which had for years been worse than useless. She took a step forward, and then little Sunshine burst into tears.

"Can it be? Oh, can it be?" she cried, while smiles and tears struggled for the mastery. "And I thought I was happy before. Oh, doctor, I love you so very, very dearly."

There were tears in other eyes than little Sunshine's, and when at night the lame girl met her mother and brother at the street door, and they saw her walk unaided up the stairs, there was another scene, and a happy home circle gathered

around the table, while little Rose told of "the good angels" who had visited her that afternoon.

There was quiet happiness in another heart not used to self-approval.

"For I didn't do a thing," mused Willie, "only I told father what a bright little creature she was, and that I did believe she would walk again."

CHAPTER V.

A STRANGE INTERVIEW.

A VERY happy family were gathered around the evening lamp in the tenement-house. Physiology had become a wonderfully interesting study since little Sunshine's cure. Jamie was deep in its mysteries now.

"I wish this book would tell us more about our framework, mother," he said, looking up. "Do you know it seems just witchery to see our darling skipping about. And to think, among so many little bones, just one getting out of joint should do so much mischief."

"I don't understand 'witchery,' Jamie," said his mother with a grave smile, "but my heart is full of thanksgiving to God and to our good friends. This framework, as you call it, is very curious and wonderful; only God could have created it, but every joint is needful. He made nothing in vain."

"How good He is!" said Rose. "My heart jumped so when the doctor pressed that sore

place, but I knew when it was all right again, though it did hurt, and I am so glad that I can help you a little, dear mother."

"You have always done that, little Sunshine," said the mother fondly. "If we suffer patiently the troubles which come upon us, we help others. It is so much easier to do than to suffer."

Rose looked up in surprise, but just then came a little tap at the door.

"Would the little girl who sang at the back window, come to the next door to see a sick lady?" was the message that the girl who was standing there brought.

The heart of little Rose "jumped" more painfully than when Dr. Windom found the dislocated joint.

"It is the sad-looking woman," she said to her mother. "I have not seen her for several days."

"An' it's that bad she is, ye'll niver see her out again," said the girl. "I thried me best to get her to see the praste, but she says na. It's the blissed angel that sings in the windy she wants, and no other."

"This may be 'the work' for you, deary," said Mrs. Harmon, kindly. "Jamie will go with you and wait for you, and perhaps I may be needed. Tell the poor creature I will come if she needs me."

Rose trembled as she saw the death-white face and great hollow eyes which she had so often seen in the area, but she went bravely forward.

"I am sorry you are so sick, Miss—Miss——"

"Anthon," said the girl as she left the room.

Rose held out her hand and it was clasped in the hot, wasted one of the sick woman.

"It was so kind in you to come. I was afraid you would not, but I did want to see you," she said. "I wanted to tell you how much you had done for me."

"I—I have done nothing," said Rose in painful embarrassment. "I have been lame, but now I can walk, and maybe——"

"You have saved me," said Miss Anthon. "Your leaflets and flowers broke my hard heart, and the songs you sung drove me to my Bible and to prayer. And the Saviour I have all my life rejected, pities and forgives me."

Tears were falling plentifully now from the blue eyes of little Rose, but she said:

"I am so glad, so very, very glad. Wouldn't you like to see my mother? She loves the Bible so, and she knows so much more than I."

"By and by," said Miss Anthon faintly, "but sing first. Sing all the sweet songs you sing at the window."

The child's voice was tremulous at first, but

singing the old familiar songs, she soon forgot her surroundings and seemed simply singing the joy of her heart.

Miss Anthon lay with closed eyes and clasped hands, echoing in her heart the song-prayer.

"Now sing 'Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow,'" she said, and tears slowly coursing over the white cheeks told how it gave voice to her prayer. "You've been a blessed angel to me," she said, as Rose finished the song. "Take this," and she held out to Rose a beautiful ring set with pearls. "You will grieve me if you refuse it," she said, seeing her hesitation.

"I could never bring myself to part with it before. I wore it when I was innocent and happy. Let me kiss you now, and then you will go home and send your mother to me. I will tell her my story."

"I hope you will be better in the morning, Miss Anthon," said Rose as she kissed the white, wasted cheek.

"Thank you ; I shall be, better forever," she answered, a bright light shining in her beautiful eyes.

Mrs. Harmon proved a sister of consolation to the dying woman. She soon learned her sad story, which, alas, was not a rare one in the

great, wicked city. An only daughter of proud, wealthy parents, she had been petted and indulged, till, when they first crossed her will by forbidding her to receive the attentions of a worthless young man, she had forsaken her home and married him.

When he found that he had nothing to hope from her parents, he left her, and she had gone down in the great maelstrom which engulfs thousands every year.

Then came five years of—pleasure? No. They were years of maddened delirium, and this was the end. For “the wages of sin is death.”

“Poor child! And in the very same city as your mother! Why did you not go to her? A mother’s heart is always open to her child.”

“You do not know my mother,” said the sick woman. “That angel child woke me from my horrible infatuation. Sitting alone day after day, her face shining, and singing always so sweetly, she would toss me down leaflets and flowers, and, and——” here a paroxysm of coughing seized her. As soon as she had recovered, Mrs. Harmon said firmly:

“Give me your father’s address. Now, you will consent to my writing to him?”

“If you will,” she answered faintly, “but it will do no good.” Then she murmured,

“ ‘Whiter than snow.’ Read it to me once more.”

And Mrs. Harmon read the precious words which had been read so often that the Bible seemed to fall open at the page: “Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”

“That is mine; and it is so sweet and precious. None but God would dare promise it. Please let that dear child keep the little gift which she shrunk from taking. I wore it before I chose the downward way, when I was innocent and pure as she. Please let her keep it.”

“If you wish it, certainly, she may,” said Mrs. Harmon, and as the sick woman closed her eyes, she read in a low voice the fourteenth chapter of St. John’s gospel: “I go to prepare a place for you.”

The eyes opened and there was a light in them not of earth.

“Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful,” she murmured. “My Saviour.”

These were the last words she spoke, but over the wasted features came a sweet calm.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you,” Mrs. Harmon read, but these were the last words, for she saw that the freed soul

had crossed the barrier that divided the worlds. The door opened hastily and a beautiful woman with hair as white as snow entered.

“Merciful God!” she cried. “Oh, Helen! Helen! My child, my poor, lost child!”

Mrs. Harmon withdrew, leaving the mother alone with her dead.

In the outer room she found a tall, stern-looking man, the father of whom the dead woman had said, “It will do no good.”

When the cold hand of death is laid on one who has incurred our resentment, the heart relents, and the proud man listened with bowed head to all that Mrs. Harmon could tell him of his lost child.

“I thank you, madam, and the little daughter,” he said brokenly when she had finished. “If we had only known, and now it is too late; but I am glad the poor, broken heart found rest at last.”

The pastor of the mission church near by was called in to officiate at the funeral, and there was a magnificent hearse to bear the cold remains to the last resting-place in Greenwood. A name was carved on the family monument, a name that had been forgotten for six years in the fashionable circles she had graced—the name of Helen Livingstone.

The fictitious name by which she had been known through the last years, was forgotten also, and the brief life which had taught so sad a lesson, was only remembered by the few who cheered its last hours.

CHAPTER VI.

A NEW PROJECT.

THE mournful episode of Helen Livingstone's death, saddened for a few days the happy hearts in the adjoining house, but constant employment, study, and the weekly visits of Anna and her pupils, made life pleasant.

Rose, too, loved now and then to look at the beautiful gift of her stranger friend and to think of her happy life when she wore it.

And then even those last sad days : could it be that she, a helpless, crippled child, had helped her ? She had said so, and the thought was a very pleasant one.

She was attending school now, besides the evening studies. There was so much to learn, and she would so much enjoy helping mother, as dear brother Jamie and sister Anna did.

Jamie came home one night in high glee.

"No more selling papers ; hurrah !" he cried. "I've got a place, with work all the time and a salary."

“My dear boy is such a help,” said his mother. “I have noticed that the Howards in the store near me had their eye on him. It is because you are always faithful and true in little things, Jamie, that they offered you the place.”

“And if I only knew German and French, I could do so much more,” said the boy. “Anybody but a scamp would be faithful and true, but I would like to be necessary.”

Mrs. Harmon laughed. “You have the right idea, Jamie,” she said, “and I believe the old Frenchman on the floor above will teach you the language.”

“Mr. Secord?” said Jamie eagerly. “Oh, mother! I’m sure he will. He thinks there is no language like his own, but I must remember to call him Monsieur when I ask him. He knows German too. I have heard him talk like a native.”

“I can help you there, Jamie. We will commence at once, and you will soon learn to speak it,” said Mrs. Harmon.

Mons. Secord was highly pleased when Mrs. Harmon asked him to become Jamie’s teacher.

“He can only study evenings,” she said, “and if you will kindly give him two hours each evening, I think you will not find him a dull pupil.”

“I sall be most happy to teach ze boy ze beautiful language,” said Mons. Secord, “and, madame, if ze petite mademoiselle wishes, it would be ver nice for her too, to learn.”

This proposal delighted Rose, who dreaded the breaking up of their pleasant study hours. Henceforth, around the study table, always brilliantly lighted every evening, might be heard a jargon which Miss Meeks said “’minded her of the Tower of Babel.” Yet the good lady was as proud and happy as possible when Rose ran down to her room to speak her first French phrases.

“And, dear Miss Meeks, Mons. Secord says my tongue was just made for the pretty language, and I can teach it sometime, and Jamie can say ever so many things in French and German.”

“It’s nice to know,” said Miss Meeks guardedly, “and there are so many Germans and French come to the store at the Howards’, that Jamie must know how to talk to them if he expects to rise; but good, honest English is good enough for me. I don’t suppose the Lord meant that everybody should speak it though, else He wouldn’t have mixed up the languages as He did when men were trying to build the Tower of Babel.”

"Did everybody speak English before that, Miss Meeks?" said Rose eagerly.

The little seamstress laughed. "I suppose not," she said, "but, deary, you must ask somebody who knows. I am sure I do not."

Mons. Secord, who prided himself on being quite a philologist, was horrified the following evening when Rose met him with the question: "Did all the people in the world once speak English?"

"Ah, no, mam'sell, ze horrible language," he said. "It vers made up of many tongues, like all ze rest. Ze root of all is ze Semitic."

Little Sunshine was satisfied with her research, though she knew as little concerning the origin of language, as before she asked the question.

"Sometime I will learn all about it," she said, smiling brightly. "Sometime when I am older."

"I've learned something new, Miss Anna," said Willie Platte, coming up to the school-room, where the governess was busied preparing lessons for the following day. "That wide-awake brother of yours and that pretty sister are studying languages—French and German. There is a School of Languages, taught in that block by a poor old French scholar; but he must be a great teacher, judging by the way Jamie gets on."

“How did you learn all this?” said Miss Anna, to whom it was no news.

“Jamie told me,” said Willie. “You see it was this way: Young Fitzallan and I were down to Howards’. You can buy anything you wish there, and I had told him about Jamie. Mr. Howard himself was in that morning, and a man came in and said something in German. Jamie answered him, and the man went on to one of the counters. ‘What did the man say?’ asked Mr. Howard of Jamie. Jamie told him and said: ‘I sent him to the German counter.’ ‘But you are not German?’ Mr. Howard said. ‘No, nor French,’ he answered, ‘but a great many of those people come here, and I intend to know what they want.’ Mr. Howard looked pleased, and you’ll see something’ll come of it. Afterward Jamie told us all about the school of languages. Isn’t it funny; and he says little Sunshine has got the real French twist in her tongue, and Mons. Secord is always praising her.”

“I am glad to hear this,” Miss Harmon said. “I know it will help Jamie, and he is such a resolute little fellow. I think he would enjoy Latin better than some young gentlemen do, and some day I hope he may have the opportunity to study that too.”

“Oh, bother!” said Willie. “A rusty, fusty

old dead language. And the conjugations are awful. I don't believe it would be so stupid learning a real live language that people about us use every day."

Miss Harmon laughed. "I do not suppose that I can convince you, Willie," she said, "for 'a man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still,' the poet says, but if you ever make a scholar, you must know Latin. So many English words come from it, too, that it is a great help in the study of our own language."

"Jamie talks as if he loved to study languages. He is very proud of his jaw-breaking German," said Willie, laughing. "I did not know as any one ever took it up that was not obliged to."

"Did you never hear of the learned blacksmith 'Elihu Burritt'?" said Miss Harmon. "He learned more than twenty languages, just for the love of it. And all the time he kept on at work at his forge. He took up the study of languages purely for recreation, and all the world has heard of him."

"It would be nice to be famous," said Willie, "if it didn't mean so much hard work."

"We do not think much of what costs us nothing," said Miss Harmon. "Work is the rule of life, and those who can work, are so

much happier than those who are laid aside. Tennyson says: 'How dull it is to pause to make an end, to rest unburnished, not to shine in use.' I have often wondered how Sunshine can be so happy."

"Yes, indeed," said Willie. "But she seems happier than ever, now that she can walk. What a busy bee she is! Do you know, Miss Anna, that I believe that Jamie's sister has a good deal to do with his being such a grand fellow? Boys are not naturally good, like girls, but they do not like to be outdone. It makes all the difference, the sort of people who are around you. Don't you think so?"

"It makes a great deal of difference, Willie, and that is why I am so much happier when I see you with Walter or Jerry Truman, than with Fitzallan. The people around us, whom we choose to have around us, become a part of us, just as truly as do the books we read."

Willie looked very grave. "I believe you are right, Miss Anna," he said, "and you are a true friend—but how is it? I admire your staunch, true people, who choose the right at once, like Walter and Jamie. But I am pretty sure to drift the other way. Isn't it droll to choose one way and go another?"

"It is very sad, Willie, but this choosing is an

awful fact, because we choose between right and wrong every day. And to choose means more than to approve. Conscience is the voice of God in your soul, and you cannot afford to go against its dictates. By and by you will go away to college. You will need a Friend there stronger than any earthly friend, for temptations will be all around you. I wish, oh, how I wish, you would choose the Divine Saviour for this Friend, Walter."

THOUGHT FOR TODAY.

Reasoning well leads to acting
well;

Justice in the mind becomes jus-
tice in the heart.

—Victor Hugo.



CHAPTER VII.

MARIE LE BLOND.

THE "school of languages," as Willie termed it, though successful in its work, was not as enjoyable as the study evenings, which it supplanted. Marie Le Blond, the young granddaughter of Mons. Secord, often accompanied him when he came down to give the lessons. She was a pretty, bright-eyed young girl, full of vivacity, and with so pure a Parisian accent that her visits were a benefit, though Rose instinctively shrunk from the gay, light-hearted girl.

Mons. Secord was not the man whom Mrs. Harmon would have chosen for her children's teacher, yet as lessons were the only subjects discussed, and she was always present, she had no fear. Poverty, too, allowed no choice.

Marie, without a mother's training, pretty and undisciplined, was budding into womanhood, learning her only lessons of religion or morality from what she saw of life about her, and the public schools.

The neat, tasteful home of the Harmons, though only a tenement-house home, was different from any other home she had ever known, and she was content to sit and listen to the lessons, and note the tasteful arrangement of the flowers, for the peace and quiet of the humble home were very pleasant. They were reading the New Testament, a strange book to Mons. Secord, who was a disciple of Voltaire.

He did not volunteer any criticisms on the book, only wishing that they could procure some more fitting book for the exercise.

"I am sure, Mons. Secord, your pupils are progressing finely," said Mrs. Harmon, "and the lessons they will learn from the one perfect life are worth more than all else."

Mons. Secord shrugged his shoulders. The gesture implied contempt, but he ventured no remark.

Marie, less prudent, looked keenly about her and asked :

"Do some people believe that nice story true, madame?"

"Certainly. I do, with all my heart; and there are millions all over the world who believe it to be a revelation from God."

"Such precepts! 'Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them

that despitely use you and persecute you.' Oh, madame, it is impossible."

"No, my dear, it is only unnatural. A great many people adopt this beautiful gospel for the rule of their lives."

The evening lessons were over, and the time had come when the teacher usually went to his room, but he lingered a moment.

"It is not in ze order of ze lessons, madame, but will you pardon me? This vere extraordinaire teaching I cannot believe."

"We must each one of us decide the matter for ourselves," said Mrs. Harmon. "The evidence is before us. We accept or reject it as we will."

"Wizout consulting ze priest, eh?" he answered with a laugh. "But pardon, madame, we are not to settle ze theology, but only to learn ze language. Ze little book is vere good," and the Frenchman made his parting bow and went out with his granddaughter.

"Poor child," said Mrs. Harmon pityingly.

"And wasn't it dreadful to hear her take the Holy Name so lightly, even in French," said Rose. "Now I know why she chills me so. She does not believe in our Lord, nor in the Bible."

"We do not realize, my children, what a

Friend He is," said Mrs. Harmon, "nor what a help is the blessed Book. It is a guide, a staff, and a light. I don't know how any one can be poorer than he who has no faith in God."

"And you are rich, mother dear, because your faith never falters," said Jamie brightly, "but poor Secord, I thought he was so nice. Perhaps it is because he is a Frenchman that he does not believe. Aren't the French people infidels, generally?"

"No, my boy. Fenelon, one of the highest dignitaries in the church, and tutor to the heir of the French crown, was one of the grandest Christians that ever lived, and the holy Madam Guyon was a prisoner in the Bastile for six years because of her faith in God and the Bible."

"I wish poor Marie knew," said Rose wistfully.

"Keep on living before her, little Sunshine," said Jamie. "Your life talks louder than preaching, and you will convince her some day."

Rose looked bewildered and her mother thought of "living epistles."

Marie Le Blond in her attic was at the same moment asking questions which her grandfather did not like to answer.

"Does what people think make any difference in their lives?" she asked.

Mons. Secord, with a gesture of impatience, launched forth into a philippic against cant and bigotry, which Marie had heard so often, that she went on as if he had not spoken.

“Because the people on the first floor are different from the rest of us. They are brighter and happier, and they seem like rich people, only they live in a tenement-house, and their furniture is no better than other people’s, except the books and the flowers. I like to go there, but they are the only ones in the block who go to the mission chapel, and they believe the Bible. I mean to study it myself.”

This was the signal for another tirade against the Bible and the churches. Society was all wrong, and they were responsible for the unjust class distinctions which placed the cultured Mrs. Harmon in a tenement-house and empty-headed dolls in palaces.

“Look at ze thousands,” he said, “in ze slums, in poverty and want, and ze grand temples for worship of a God no one has seen.”

Then he denounced the wealthy classes living in luxury, heedless of the cries of the poor; but Marie had heard these tirades so often that she did not listen. She was contrasting the bright, cheery home below with their own dull attic.

“It is an awful thing to be poor,” she said, as if this had been occupying her whole thought. “Yet,” she added in a lower voice, “they are poor, too, and always happy.”

M. Secord scowled ominously, and, turning to a small cupboard, took from thence a black bottle, and pouring out a glass of liquor, drank it, muttering:

“This beastly climate!”

Marie saw this. She had attended the “gospel temperance meetings” to ridicule all she heard, but the words came back to her now: “Who hath woe, who hath sorrow, who hath contentions, who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine.” How the words clung to her memory! She had tried to forget them, for they came from the Book which her grandfather hated. But—were they true? Did not the poor grandfather prove them true? Had he not “redness of eyes,” and did he not grow contentious and irritable every day? Marie always spoke what was in her mind, and she said:

“It is not the Bible, I think. It is not the blue-ribboners who have all the sorrow and woe. It is the strong drink that makes all the trouble.”

Mons. Secord looked up in horrified amaze-

ment. His granddaughter, whom he had taught to scorn the Bible as a vile imposture! But he had not time to speak, for from an adjoining room in the attic came a piercing shriek.

“McCarthy is beating his wife again. Oh, go to her!” said Marie with clasped hands.

All was still now, only the heavy tramp of feet coming and going. Marie sat alone, trembling with fear. She did not know that the cold wings of the death-angel had just swept by, and that the corpse of a murdered woman lay cold and still in the McCarthy room. The drunken husband had come home, as he had often done before, to find an empty cupboard and a sick, half-starved wife. He had beaten her as usual, but she had fallen down with only one piercing cry. The blows had been too sure, and when the police officer and others came upon the scene, she did not plead as she had done before:

“Don’t be hard on the poor b’y; ’twas the dhrink that did it.”

The voice was silent now, and the half-sobered husband stood stupidly gazing upon his victim, not realizing the awful fact that his hands were stained with blood—that he was a murderer.

The police report in the next morning’s paper contained an item, “Another brutal wife mur-

der," which hundreds read without giving it a second thought, though their votes had helped to license the places where the murderer had been fitted for his crime. Could the record of wife murders which the recording angel keeps be known, men might be more in earnest in putting down the curse.

Mrs. Harmon and her children, preparing for the Sabbath-school the next morning, were surprised by a call from Marie Le Blond. She was prettily dressed, for Marie had the Frenchwoman's tact for arranging the poorest materials tastefully.

"May I go with you to the Sabbath-school?" she said. "I want to learn more of the Book you study. It is very new and strange."

Marie was surprised at the cordial welcome which she received. These people had seemed so cold and distant; now they were cordial and kind. And Rose said:

"Our lessons are in the New Testament, and I am so glad you are going, Marie. We have a lovely teacher. She is a very wealthy man's daughter and can wear diamonds, but she dresses almost as plainly as we do, and she is so gentle and kind."

"Why does she dress in that way?" said Marie; "it certainly is not sin to dress prettily."

"She wants to make us feel that she is one of us," said Mrs. Harmon. "Don't you see, the children will listen more carefully to her teaching when they know that she loves them and cares for them."

"I do not know. It is not like the people I have known. It is all so different," said Marie. "'Every one for himself' is the motto. Only you are so different. Why is it? Is it the Book you study what you believe? I have been told that the Bible makes people proud and selfish, but you are not."

"My dear child," said Mrs. Harmon, "there is no book in the world so far from that as the Bible. Read it for yourself, dear. If we follow its teaching we shall care more to make others happy than to be happy ourselves. We find our happiness in that way. This is our Saviour's teaching: 'Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.' These were His own words, and He even washed His disciples' feet to give us a lesson of humility."

Marie held up her hands. All this was so contrary to the teaching of her life, and the visit to the Sunday-school deepened her wonder. The people who taught such lessons believed

them, she could see that, and the contrast from the dreary monotony of her life was so pleasant that she asked to be enrolled as a pupil.

Rose was delighted, and her face was so bright that Marie said to her on their return home :

“ You look as though you had found a treasure, Rose.”

“ Yes,” Rose answered, “ I am so happy, for if you study the Bible, you can’t help loving the Saviour, and nothing could make me so happy as that.”

“ I thought you didn’t care for me. No one does,” said Marie sadly.

But the child soon learned her mistake. She felt as if she had entered a new world when her beautiful teacher called upon her and exerted herself to find employment for her; then she was so kindly welcomed by the Harmons, where Rose made her feel that she was conferring a favor in helping her prepare the lessons, while she was herself learning the wonderful story which never wearies nor grows stale.

The fuming of the captious grandfather was met with so much patience and gentleness that he wondered what had come over the child. When, at last, through her faithful teacher and her study of the French Testament with Rose, she claimed the promises so freely given, and

realized that the living Christ was her personal Saviour, she knew the meaning of Rose's words, "Nothing could make me so happy."

There was great rejoicing at the Harmons when Marie with her frank impetuosity avowed her belief in the despised Bible and her determination to join the little mission church. All the grandfather's abuse and threatenings fell powerless. She patiently cared for his comfort, but went quietly forward and made public profession of her faith in Christ and received the ordinance of baptism.

"Isn't it wonderful the change in Marie Le Blond," said Rose to her mother. "If only the poor old gentleman would be as wise, we would be entirely happy."

"We have read the Bible every day and have become so familiar with the words that we do not fully realize their power," said Mrs. Harmon. "To Marie they were new, and I am glad she has chosen 'the better part.' We will do what we can for the poor old gentleman, but I fear he has made his choice as decisively as has Marie. We do not fully realize what a fearful responsibility is ours when God gives us the power to choose what our destiny shall be."

CHAPTER VIII.

LOOKING UP.

“MISS ANNA, you know, of course, that your nice brother has been promoted,—and didn’t I tell you so?” said Willie Platte, in high glee that his prediction had been verified. “But doesn’t he roll off the German!” he added, laughing gaily. “He isn’t quite so glib with his French, though he understands what people want. Little Sunshine goes far ahead of him there. It is because she is so much with that French girl, Marie Le Blond.”

“Yes, Willie; Marie is a great help to Rose, and she thinks that Rose is such a help to her. There are so many ways of helping, and we are all helpers or—hinderers;—mayn’t I coin a word?”

Willie laughed again as he said :

“That is just the word you want, Miss Anna; but,” he added in a graver tone, “which am I? Now, little Sunshine and that French girl are

real missionaries. They help each other, and have almost doubled the mission school, so Miss Aubrey tells me. And Walter is a helper. I feel always, when he or Sunshine are around, as if I must be better, and then that Fitzallan comes 'round and I'm off on the other tack. I am afraid I belong to the 'hinderers.' ”

Miss Harmon did not smile. There were tears in her eyes as she said :

“ Dear Willie, you are so kind and generous, and capable of so much good, it hurts me to see you so vacillating. Walter and Rose are no different, only their feet are on the Rock. They have chosen once for all whom they will serve, and when one leans on the Almighty Arm, there is no danger.”

This talk was too grave for gay-hearted Willie, who fancied that liberty was just outside the gate of safety, and he changed the conversation by saying :

“ I've just been to the conservatory, Miss Anna, and there are some of the loveliest roses out. I mean to take some down to little Sunshine to-day. See ' she doesn't copy them ! ”

“ Have you spoken to mamma ? ”

“ Oh, yes. She gave me permission long ago to take whatever I chose, and since the French girl has work in the millinery-shop, it makes a

market for all the flowers little Sunshine can make. Isn't it jolly?"

For answer, Miss Harmon stooped over and kissed the broad, open brow.

"You make it hard for me to leave you, my dear boy," she said.

"To leave us, Miss Anna? Whatever can you mean?" said Willie, looking up in surprise.

"This is my last year with you, Willie. You are to go into the family of an excellent clergyman for a while, and then come college days, and, my dear boy, you will stand firm then. It is the beginnings of evil that are so dreadful. I shall be far away in a Western city, but I shall always want to hear good tidings from my dear boys."

"It is too bad. I can't bear it, Miss Anna. You may find as troublesome pupils in that Western city as we are."

"My dear Willie, I never expect to find pupils so dear as you and Walter, for I am going into a public school, and I do not know one person in the great city of Chicago, where I am going. I would not, of course, choose this, but the way opened for me, and it seemed my duty to accept it."

"That word 'duty' is a hard one, I think," said Willie.

“And it is to me a beautiful one,” said Miss Anna. “A great preacher has said, ‘Duty is the soul’s fireside’; and when you are away among strangers, see if this isn’t a pleasant thought. The fireside is the most homelike and restful place on earth.”

“Do Jamie and Mrs. Harmon know of this?” said Willie.

“Yes; and now that Jamie is to get so good a salary, my mother will soon sell out her stand and go back to the village home. It is strange, though, I am not so happy as I thought I should be. To pay off the mortgage on the dear home has been the goal we have all been striving for, and now that it is done, I quite dread the changes which must come. Yet mother will be happy, and I ought to be, though we shall be so widely scattered.”

“It will be worse for you, Miss Anna, for you will be all alone among hundreds of thousands of people,” said Willie dolefully. “That is what I should call a wilderness.”

“No, dear boy, you forget the best Friend will be with me, and then I have a lady friend who procured me the situation. I must adopt little Sunshine’s plan of always looking up the bright places. There are plenty of them in every life, if we only look for them.”

There was very fair weather in the tenement-house at this time, for Marie, with her strong will and tact in planning, had persuaded her grandfather to leave the lonely attic and take a pleasant room near the Harmons. This she fitted up so tastefully that the old gentleman found it more attractive than the places where he had spent so many idle hours. He had an object before him, too, and if he could accomplish this, he and the little granddaughter could live in comfort. He could not but see that the child was greatly changed. She was so thoughtful for him always, that for her sake the wine-bottle, which she so much dreaded, no longer found a place in the dwelling, and this made the object more easy of attainment. Mrs. Harmon had asked him to purchase her little stand, which was so liberally patronized and which was such a comfort to the busy workers on the avenue. Marie had offered to contribute her little store to the purchase, and she had learned to make delicate candies and confections, which would add to the attractiveness of the stand.

"I am sure we could keep it up," she said to Mrs. Harmon, "but it is very sad for you to think of leaving us."

"We shall not think of going before spring," said Mrs. Harmon, "and then we must leave

my dear boy. But it will be a pleasure to think of you all so nicely cared for, and I am sure, dear Marie, you will not forget the poor people you have helped nor the Friend whom we love above all others."

There were tears in Marie's eyes as she answered :

"Forget Him! Oh, dear Mrs. Harmon, can I ever do that? And if I love Him, I must work for Him. My dear friend, I wouldn't change places with anybody; I love to work with Him and for Him so well. And I do believe my dear old grandfather will learn what a Friend He is. He is so different, don't you see?"

"Yes, dear; he is greatly changed, and we will hope for the best," said Mrs. Harmon. "But here come our Anna and her young pupils."

The exquisite flowers which Willie brought filled the room with their sweet perfume, and for a while nothing else could be thought of. But the new project soon came up, and Willie, with his usual open-hearted generosity, offered to assist the old Frenchman in the purchase. Marie was called in to admire the roses and Willie's generous offer was made known.

"I, too, would like so much to help," said lit-

tle Walter. "My allowance for Christmas is just the same as Willie's."

"You are all so kind," said Marie, "and perhaps we may accept a small sum, but only as a loan. My grandfather is very proud. He was not always so poor. But, Rose, perhaps the kind young gentleman will help us on our Christmas-tree. The children of our mission school never saw one," she said, turning toward Willie, "and many of them are very, very poor—poorer even than we are."

"Miss Aubrey, mamma's friend, spoke to her about a Christmas-tree in a mission chapel," said Willie, "and mamma was very glad to help. She will help in this affair, too, I know, for she loves to do good; and, Walter, we will do all we can."

"Yes; I should enjoy it better than anything," said Walter.

"Our teacher's name is Miss Aubrey, too, and she is so lovely," said Rose. "Wouldn't it be strange if she were your mamma's friend, and that this very tree were the one she is planning about? Things do come about so strangely in this world."

"That would be gay," said Willie.

The old Frenchman accepted the loan thankfully, and even became interested in the Christmas-tree. To care for those who were poorer

than himself seemed a dignified and manly thing to do, be his faith in "the legend," as he termed it, never so small, and as he was less under the power of the "invisible spirit of wine," he was more easily influenced by the energetic Marie.

The new face at the familiar coffee-stand on the avenue was not at first welcomed by the crowds who had come to depend on Mrs. Harmon's quiet place for their morning refreshment ; but so well were they served, and so delicious was the beverage provided, that soon a small room was rented, and "the French Coffee House" became as popular as Mrs. Harmon's place had been.

Marie found ample room now for the development of her genius, and the delicate dishes and toothsome confections she made found ready sale.

The place in the millinery-store was resigned, for all her time was needed now for the demands of the business.

"We owe it all to you, dear Mrs. Harmon," she often said, "to you and the blessed teaching of the Book."

"If we have helped you, I am very thankful," Mrs. Harmon answered, "but we owe all to the Friend who never forgets us. If we have His Spirit, we shall be happiest when we can help one another."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHRISTMAS-TREE.

THE one absorbing topic for weeks in the humble homes which surrounded the Mission Chapel, was the promised Christmas-tree. Many of the children had seen the fragrant evergreen trees in the shops, and some of them had caught glimpses of them in the up-town churches, all gleaming with lights and loaded with beautiful gifts.

But this was to be their very own, in the chapel where every Sabbath they were taught the Gospel which the Christ came to bring.

Many of these lessons they did not remember, but the unwearied patience and kindness of the teachers they could not forget, and then—the Christmas-tree !

It was a crowded house into which Miss Aubrey led her friend Mrs. Platte on Christmas eve, a crowd of such people as that lady had never looked upon before.

A large tree, brilliantly lighted and heavily

loaded, occupied the small altar. Beside it sat Anna and her young pupils, their faces shining and their eyes sparkling.

“How happy the dear boys look,” said the mother, as she found a seat not far away.

“They are tasting a pleasure sweeter than any other,” said Miss Aubrey in a low voice. “You know it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Miss Aubrey seated herself at the small cabinet organ, and a crowd of little people sang the Christmas hymns.

The story of the Star of Bethlehem and the babe in the manger was told by the superintendent so simply and sweetly, that the smallest child could understand it. There were recitations by the little ones, to which their parents listened with pride and pleasure.

Never before could they be induced to enter the chapel. Now they listened to the story which never loses its charm ; they saw the lovely young lady teachers, from homes of wealth and luxury, yet dressed so quietly and plainly. They knew that these had left their own beautiful church services, that their neglected children might be instructed.

It was like the story to which they had just listened, of the Son of the King who had come

down from the glories of heaven to bring poor wanderers to Himself.

The distribution of the gifts was a continuation of the same story. Besides the many useful articles, there were numberless toys, which caused the little ones to cry out with delight. Walter and Willie Platte stood on the step-ladders on either side of the tree, handing down to Rose Harmon, Marie Le Blond, and others, the treasures, which were received with so much delight.

Mrs. Platte was intensely interested, and when, after the happy throngs had dispersed, she saw Miss Aubrey, she said :

“I have so wondered at you, dear, that you could devote yourself to these people, but I wonder no longer. I have enjoyed the evening very much.”

“And this is little Sunshine, I fancy,” she added, turning toward Rose Harmon.

No other name would have fitted the golden-haired girl who, with her sweet, sunny smiles, had been darting here and there through the crowded chapel, with gifts which were brighter for the kind, loving spirit of the messenger.

“It is all sunshine, I think,” said Rose. “The people are all so happy, and now they will come to chapel and learn. And we all thank you and

Willie and Walter so much. We could not have carried it through but for them."

"It is the jolliest Christmas eve I ever knew," said Willie.

"And it is ever so much nicer than having presents yourself," said Walter, "so you needn't thank us at all. You have taught us a new way to have a good time."

"A new way to have a good time." These words of little Walter rung in Mrs. Platte's ears for many a day.

There were two ways: seeking pleasure for self, which was insatiable as the grave, and never satisfied; and doing good to others, which brought sweet content. Was not working for humanity the only way in which one could work for Christ?

So the cultured lady learned her lesson at the chapel Christmas eve, and her own child taught it. The words were true, "a little child shall lead them."

Mrs. Platte was greatly interested in the young girl of whom she had heard so much, and sometimes asked Anna to bring her up to spend the day with her.

The splendor of the great house did not at all overawe the child. She had a delicacy and refinement of manner which fitted her for any

station, and seemed intuitively to adapt herself to her surroundings. But her greatest charm was one which Mrs. Platte could not define. She was undeniably beautiful, but it was not her beauty which surrounded her with such an atmosphere of purity and peace. The moment she entered the room, this influence was felt, though she had not uttered a word.

Here and there in this busy world we meet such rare natures, and the gift is far greater than that of beauty, for it is fadeless and eternal.

But what the rich and luxurious furnishing of the great house failed to accomplish, the beautiful conservatory, filled with fragrance and bloom, did for little Sunshine.

She stood like one entranced in the midst of it all, her lips parted, her color coming and going, and her eyes moist with tears.

The flowers which Willie had so often brought her, the roses and lilies so delicate and beautiful, had made her very happy; but here was such a profusion of beauty, such rich, tropical palms, and so many delicate flowers, that her heart ached with an excess of happiness.

“Well, little Sunshine, what do you think of it?” said Willie, who had been watching her speaking face.

“Think of it? It is heavenly,” she said, with clasped hands. “I don’t wonder you and Walter are so good, when you can see all this beauty every day.”

Willie had the grace to blush. This little girl did not know him as well as he knew himself. What she said of Walter was all right, but he was not tempted as Willie had been. Fitzallan was his almost constant companion, and he made it as easy to choose the wrong path, as Sunshine did the right.

Poor Willie! He had made a sad mistake away back at the dividing of the ways. True, a casual observer might not see the difference in the life of the brothers, but Willie knew it. He knew that he did not deserve the title “so good,” and that his weakness and vacillation of purpose was, to say the least, most unworthy.

After all, is not the pearl of happiness which all the world is madly seeking after, enshrined in a true, pure heart, in the honest self-consciousness, that whatever the world may say, we have chosen the path of right?

And the loss of that self-consciousness, the knowing that we dare not trust ourselves in the choosing of that which we know to be right, is of all things most bitter.

CHAPTER X.

AUNT AMELIA.

“I HAVE a letter which will interest you, my dear,” said Mr. Platte, coming into his wife’s room with an open letter in his hand. “You remember my sister Amelia? We have never enjoyed much of her society, for she is not fond of fashionable life; but now she says that if it is agreeable to us, she will come and spend a few weeks with us.”

“That is delightful,” said Mrs. Platte. “I will write at once and assure her of a welcome. She is almost angelic, I think; but, Frank, I have often wondered that with her warm heart and her love for little children she has never married. What a lovely home-maker she would be.”

“She makes the homes happy wherever she may be,” said Mr. Platte. “She has had her little romance—her ‘discipline,’ she calls it. She was engaged to a talented young lawyer once, and I believe she loved him sincerely, but she

broke the engagement and he went to the bad. He was a little wild, though she did not know it. Perhaps she might have reformed him if she had married him, for she is so good."

"No, Frank," said Mrs. Platte. "This marrying a man to reform him has been tried too often. It is easier to drag down than to lift up, especially when a man is the slave of strong drink. Dear Amelia. I shall love her better than ever, now I know what she has suffered."

The bright, happy-hearted young lady whom the Plattes welcomed a few days later, did not at all have the air of a martyr. She entered with such zest into all the projects for her entertainment, that familiar scenes developed new beauties when seen through her eyes.

The obelisk, which had looked down upon so many generations in its early home on the banks of the Nile, revealed none of the scenes upon which it had gazed for thousands of years, to the eager inhabitants of the New World, in which it had now found a home. What wonderful tales Aunt Amelia told the young people gathered around its base.

They saw again the myriads of dusky slaves, who, at the bidding of the Pharaohs, wrought the stupendous creations in stone which to-day are among the wonders of the world.

They saw the patient toiler raising the life-giving waters of the Nile to irrigate his fields, with the same rude machinery which is used until this day. They saw the royal pageantry of the Egyptian courts, and the beautiful and voluptuous Cleopatra floating on the bosom of the Nile in her gilded barge, shaded by embroidered silken canopies, her person adorned by gems of fabulous value, her ears regaled with sweetest music, and the fairest maidens of the realm propelling her oars.

“Isn’t it jolly to learn history in this way?” said Willie in a low voice to his little brother.

“Yes, indeed, and we’ll like history better after this,” replied Walter.

In the museum they saw the dismal-looking mummies. These had been familiar with the scenes which Aunt Amelia had so graphically described.

They saw the exhumed treasures which the archæologist had brought to light, and Aunt Amelia’s stories were such delightful illustrations that Walter declared to his mother that “dear Auntie made everything look alive.” Yet, amid all the scenes of interest to their visitor, none seemed to please her so much as the mission school.

Miss Aubrey was delighted to find a kindred

spirit, and told her some incidents more thrilling and terrible than can be found on the pages of the novelist.

A beautiful young girl, from a home in the country where every want had been supplied, had been lured away by a villain, and in her remorse and despair, had tried to drown her sorrows in the intoxicating cup. Miss Aubrey had tried hard to save her, and had hoped that she had succeeded, but her betrayer and the wine-cup had baffled all her efforts at the last, and she had been found, after a long debauch, bruised and battered—dead. Was she murdered?

It mattered little whether her death had been compassed by the poison-cup, or by the sudden stroke of violence.

She was dead.

“My dear Miss Platte, when I entered this work among our home heathen, I had no idea of its magnitude,” said Miss Aubrey. “It just absorbs me. I have no time nor heart for fashionable gayeties. My old friends sometimes wonder at my taste (?) and dub me ‘the home missionary,’ but I wonder, too, how people, professing to be followers of Christ, can feel no interest in the lost ones He died to save. One of these said to me: ‘Thank heaven, we haven’t a single poor person in our church’; but our Saviour said:

‘The poor ye have always with you.’ And oh, my dear, when now and then I succeed in snatching a poor wanderer from the snares of the Destroyer, I am so happy. There is a happy Christian home not far from here where I love to go. It is humble, to be sure, but the pretty young wife and mother was aided back to the path of right. The young husband knew her history, and together they are making a beautiful home picture, an illustration of the power of our holy religion to raise fallen humanity. I count it greater honor to help form such a picture than to paint the most wonderful copies of nature.”

“Yes, indeed, Miss Aubrey,” said Miss Platte, “for humanity is so much dearer to the heart of God than the fair earth which He made for its dwelling-place.”

“There is another young girl,” said Miss Aubrey, “a very skillful nurse, who has employment in the best families, who, but for a helping hand and the pitying love of Christ, would now be sleeping in a dishonored grave. Now and then the knowledge of these things reaches me and helps me so much.”

“But you cannot know how much the influences you have brought to bear have changed human lives, Miss Aubrey. If we could only

realize that helping to raise and restore a fallen one—be the cause of that fall whatever it may—is copying the Divine Christ. He was right who sung :

‘ Oh for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun.’

Yet I do believe Christians are awaking to the fact that ‘ Love is the fulfilling of the law,’ and that a hand reached out to help humanity is better than all frames and feeling.”

The young Plattes had introduced their visitor to the Harmons, and to the French girl, Marie Le Blond, and the little world in which they moved interested her much.

The vivacious Marie was a general favorite, and Miss Aubrey depended on her tact and energy whenever she found a difficult case.

But Rose, who now often spent the day with her sister Anna, charmed Aunt Amelia, as she did every one else.

“ We’ll have to lose them both so soon, Auntie, that we must make the most of our time,” said Willie. “ Do you know we are to go into a poky clergyman’s family where there will be nothing but Greek and Latin, and mathematics, till we get ready to enter college? Don’t you pity us?”

"Perhaps you won't find it so 'poky' as you anticipate," said Miss Platte. "You can make it what you choose. One has wisely said that our happiness depends not so much in doing what we like, as liking what we have to do."

"And that is so," said Walter. "Of course, we must study a great deal if we are to be of any use in the world, and I mean to like it."

"Walter always thinks of 'being of use,' and I care more for having a good time," said Willie, laughing good-humoredly.

"I have noticed that," said Aunt Amelia gravely.

"And you think I am very bad," said Willie. "You do not say so, but I can see it in your eyes."

"No, Willie dear, you do not read aright. I feel anxious about you. I will admit, you are standing at the place where you must choose one of two ways. They do not look so different now as they will later on; but one leads to life, the other to death. I have heard people laugh sometimes when they saw young boys wild and roistering. 'They are only sowing their wild oats,' they say. But the Bible says, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' You cannot begin too young to sow

good seed, for life is one long seed-sowing, and the harvest comes after."

Walter stood close beside his aunt, his dark, earnest eyes fixed on her face with such a serious expression, that she stooped and kissed him impulsively.

"Walter chooses the right way always, auntie," said Willie.

"It is as natural for him as for little Sunshine."

"I don't think it is natural for any one, dear Willie. Life is a battle-ground, and we learn—we must learn to resist evil. Every one of us follows or resists evil every day of our lives."

"I do not think so," said Willie. "Of course, you are wiser than I, auntie, but even a boy can see that what men do is of more consequence than what we do."

"Yes, but what the man does depends greatly on the boyhood he has come up from. Did you never hear the old adage, 'The boy is father to the man'? Some day I will tell you a sad little story which illustrates this."

"Tell it now, please. It will do us more good," said Walter, "and we like your stories so much."

"You will not like this one, but it is true. I

have only known the last chapters, yet many who knew the beginning have told me what they grew from. Dr. Lawton, a leading physician in Granby, had two bright children, a son and a daughter. Of course they were very happy, for the boy William was unusually keen and witty, and his sister Kate was lovely and amiable. Here are two beginnings in the same family. Could you choose, which one would you take to build a life upon?"

"I would take the boy's chance," said Walter, "for, you know, auntie, boys have so much to help them. They can do whatever they choose, and then they can grow up into grand, noble men."

"And you, Willie?"

"Of course I'd take the boy's, auntie; but girls don't have so hard a time as boys, because there are not so many traps set for them."

"William Lawton found these traps early," said Aunt Amelia. "Dr. Lawton did not know it. In those days wine was offered to guests, and the boy learned to taste the wine left in the glasses. Then the good old deacon had a distillery a little way up the ravine near the house. The curious boy often visited this place and tasted the fiery liquor which came from the spoiled grain. It went to his brain and made

him so droll and funny that the workmen gave him the fiery whiskey every time he came there, and made merry over the mad antics of the doctor's boy. The busy doctor, absent from home night and day, knew nothing of all this, nor did the mother and sister. They only knew that William was wild and careless and cared nothing for books. Poor boy! He had learned the lesson too well which King Solomon gave two thousand years ago, 'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging.'"

"I should have thought his sister would have found him out," said Walter.

"There was a temperance movement," said Aunt Amelia, "the first temperance movement known, and people woke up to the ruin and wretchedness that strong drink brings. Then it all came out, and the deacon stopped his distillery. But it was too late for poor Bill, as every one called him now. He came home often crazy drunk, and the doctor tried every means in his power to save his poor boy, but he had learned the rest of his lesson too thoroughly. 'Who hath woe, who hath contentions, who hath babbling, who hath wounds without cause, who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.' There was one part of the

lesson that he would not heed. 'Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright,'—fermentation, you see,—that which makes it 'bite like a serpent' and 'sting like an adder.' But he learned this: 'Thine eye shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not. When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.'"

"Is that all in the Bible, auntie?"

"Yes, Willie; every word of it. It is a lesson taught by one who knew, and it is the eternal Truth."

"It is awful; but it is just like drunken men now. Oh, auntie, I'll never be like that. But what a memory you must have!"

"Some lessons are burned into one's memory. But, my dears, I must finish my sad story. Dr. Lawton was taken sick and knew he must die. What would become of his lost boy? He made his will, leaving a farm for his support, and had a guardian appointed to care for him, like a sheep or a horse. All the difference there seemed to be between poor Bill and

an animal was, he would get drunk whenever he could, and—he could vote.”

“Oh, Aunt Amelia!” cried Walter in a tone of horror.

“True,” she answered. “His party would bring him to the polls sober at every election and then give him all the whiskey he wanted.”

“I’d rather be a girl than such a man,” said Walter. “But what became of the girl?”

“She is a beautiful, Christian lady, moving in the first circles, and do you wonder that she with her lovely daughters are strong temperance women? Just before I came here poor Bill was laid in the grave after a long life that was worse than wasted.”

“It does not seem as though such things could be,” said Walter; “but you knew this story, Aunt Amelia?”

“Yes, and a great many more just as sad,” she answered. “The serpent Alcohol is a worse foe to the nation than all others combined. I heard a lecturer make the assertion before a large assembly that there was not a family in the land which had not, in some of its branches, suffered from its power. Further, he said: ‘There is not in this audience a single person who has not a relative, no further removed than a cousin, who has not been stung

by this serpent. If there are any such present, please rise.' And not one person arose. Now, my dears, I have given you quite a temperance lecture and you have been patient. I want you to hate the vile serpent as I do."

CHAPTER XI.

THE OLD HOME.

THE long-hoped-for removal of the Harmons to their village home was accomplished, yet it did not bring the perfect happiness it promised. True, Anna was once more with them, yet the true, brave brother must remain at his post, and the sorrow of the young Plattes and the violent grief of Marie Le Blond was a sad memory. Yet the little cottage with its sheltering background and the music of its babbling stream looked a very haven of rest.

“And Jamie can come home for his summer vacation,” said Rose, “and perhaps the Plattes will call on us on their way to the seashore. Oh, the country is so beautiful! I love every daisy and every spear of grass.”

The home was, indeed, restful to Mrs. Harmon, for all its associations were connected with the one precious life so dear to her, and to Anna, who knew that before her lay an untried future among strangers.

"We will be happy while we may, little Sunshine," she said. "We must gather up the sunbeams rather than the shadows, and send some of them, if we can, to Walter and Willie. I am glad Aunt Amelia is to remain with them through the summer."

"I wish," said Rose hesitatingly—"I wish that Willie was as firm in the right as Walter is. He is so generous and good, if he were only stronger!"

Anna sighed. Rose had echoed the wish she had often indulged. Her young pupils had grown very dear to her, and she said:

"We must write to them, dear. Tell them all about our cozy cottage, and ask them to stop with us as long as they can. Willie says little Sunshine always makes him feel as if he wanted to be better, and letters maybe will keep up the influence."

"Do you think I have an influence over him, Anna?" said Rose, blushing brightly. "And he asked me to write to him every week. I didn't promise, for I didn't know as I ought; but he has always been so kind to me. Don't you remember the lovely flowers he always brought me? He isn't a bit proud, though he is so far above me."

"I don't believe it would be much of a task

for you to write Willie a letter once a week," said Anna, "and I know he would prize it more than you did the flowers. I am sure the letters I shall receive in my exile will be very welcome."

So the bright, gossipy letter was written,—
"So like little Sunshine," as Willie declared; and a few weeks later Mrs. Platte, Aunt Amelia, Willie, and Walter were snugly domiciled in the pretty cottage under the hill.

The lads eagerly explored the hills, bringing back treasures of delicate ferns and mosses, and under the escort of Rose, visited the various manufactories with which the village abounded. They saw the handsome silk-mills a little down the valley, the many manufactories of the multi-form articles which filled the dealers' shelves. How wonderful and complicated was the machinery by which the simple articles were made which were so familiar that the lads had almost fancied that, like Topsy, they "grewed."

"Everybody works here," said Willie. "Hands and brains are all busy. How jolly it must be to be master of all this wonderful machinery."

But the rocks and trees behind the cottage had greater charms for Walter.

"They couldn't weave a leaf with all their machinery," he said; and Willie added:

"Now we know why you are so good, little Sunshine. Here in the country everything about you is pure and sweet."

"So good! Oh, Willie, I don't think I am good at all," Rose answered, "but there is plenty of evil even here. We have no license here now, and no liquor-shops, but it wasn't always so," and her voice was sad and low.

Then Willie remembered Anna's story. Even here the trail of the serpent was found.

The remembrance came to Walter, too, and his thought was: "I will do all I can to put it down."

The crowning event of their visit was an excursion by the entire party to Mt. Holyoke. The crossing of the river in the primitive ferry-boat and the dizzy ride up the inclined railway, with the magnificent panorama which lay outspread beneath them when the summit was reached, were experiences new and delightful to all.

The Connecticut River, like a broad, silvery ribbon, floated as if wind-tossed, here and there through the valley, and the villages nestling amid the richly variegated fields had many of them a history.

Mrs. Harmon pointed out to Mrs. Platte the famous Seminary which makes the name of the

consecrated Mary Lyon immortal. It was the pioneer woman's college in fact if not in name, and "its influence is felt all over the world to-day," she said enthusiastically. "Yes, Mrs. Platte, the Christian womanhood which is doing so much for humanity, will always remember our Mary Lyon," she continued. "She sleeps within the Seminary grounds, and her spirit seems still to pervade the place."

Anna was pointing out to Aunt Amelia and the boys the scenes made famous in the early history of the country, the seat of Amherst College, and just here a party of Japanese students from that same college crossed the veranda and were recording their names in the register.

Their swarthy complexions, black eyes, and the unintelligible language in which they were conversing, drew the attention of the young Plattes from the interesting scenery before them.

Anna, in a low voice, told them who the queer-looking strangers were, and when they had gone out on one of the verandas and were partaking of refreshments, laughing and talking gaily in their own language, she said :

"We have forgotten to register," and the party went at once to the desk. The signatures of the strangers were the first objects of interest.

"Tokio ; think of it. Half way 'round the

world. That's where those chaps live," said Willie excitedly. "And what names! Whatever can this be?" and he pointed to some hieroglyphics which one of the strangers had placed on the page.

"That is the young gentleman's signature in Japanese," said Miss Anna, laughing. "Now you can see what is one of the first tasks of our missionaries; to learn the language."

The gentlemanly proprietor of the house here came up. "Would the ladies like to look at the signature of the sweet singer, Jenny Lind?"

He brought forward a large register, which bore the marks of much handling. Among his treasures he counted these great books, which contained the autographs of many illustrious people who had lived during the last half century.

The girlish chirography of the Swedish singer was duly admired, as well as the graphic description of her fresh, young beauty on the day, so long ago, which she spent upon the mountain.

"She was so happy and gay," he said, "and thought Northampton, her favorite stopping place, a perfect Paradise."

"The 'Swedish Nightingale' left pleasant memories everywhere," said Mrs. Platte, "and it is nice that such delightful places should be associated with her memory."

"What a long day it has been, and so very pleasant," said Walter, when they had reached home. "I have learned a great deal to-day, Miss Anna, and shall always think of you all with the beautiful mountain and the sweet singer."

They were sitting on the veranda in the twilight, and Mrs. Platte said: "Yes, dear Mrs. Harmon and Miss Anna, we have had a delightful visit, one we shall remember with pleasure all our lives. I wish you could go on with us to the seashore."

"Must we go to-morrow?" said Willie. "It is so jolly here."

But Mrs. Platte's plans were fixed, and the following morning the pleasant party broke up with mutual regret.

Rose, wandering forlornly through the deserted rooms, came upon a sealed letter directed to her mother. It contained a sum of money which Mrs. Platte begged her to accept as a personal favor; not as payment for the hospitality which they had so much enjoyed.

If she would do this, and permit her to come again and enjoy the quiet of their home, she would count it such a favor.

"Mrs. Platte is a true lady," said Mrs. Harmon, when she had finished reading the letter.

“Did you ever doubt it, mamma?” said Anna. “There isn’t a particle of snobbishness about her. She treats us all as if we were her equals.”

“And she can confer a favor without wounding. Listen,” and she read the letter aloud.

“That is like her,” said Anna, “and I know she is sincere ; and, mamma, isn’t this better than the dressmaking upon which you depend? You are a very pleasant hostess, and that isn’t always the case among really nice people.”

“To think of my own daughter turning flatterer,” said Mrs. Harmon, with one of Sunshine’s own smiles. “But I will write to Mrs. Platte this very day.”

CHAPTER XII.

ANNA AS TEACHER.

THE great Western city in which Anna Harmon found her home was a new world to her. There was a resistless rush and hurry in the very atmosphere. Colossal fortunes were amassed in a decade in this great metropolis, which had risen on the shores of the great lake within the last fifty years.

Education had not been neglected, and temples of learning arose everywhere amid the din of busy life, affording the means for the lowliest to rise to whatever position they coveted.

Anna found herself in a department of a school numbering hundreds of pupils, from every rank in life, eagerly securing the treasures of learning offered for their acceptance.

Her kind, pleasant manners soon won the good-will of her pupils, and she studied their differing characters with interest.

"I am sure you would be delighted, dearest mamma," she wrote, "with my bright, intelligent pupils. There is such absolute equality

among them. The son of a millionaire is here, and he does not assume superiority over the son of his father's coachman. One of my brightest pupils is a colored boy. He leads his classes, and all the others cheer him on and encourage him. Then there are young Jews, keen and intelligent as they are everywhere, and treated as equals, as they are not everywhere. I am getting greatly interested in my charge, and I have such a pleasant boarding-place. Several of the teachers and some young business men constitute the family, and I might be very dissipated if I chose to accept half the invitations which I receive. Never fear, dear mamma, that your Anna will try to pose as a belle. A Mr. Lester, a very wealthy and fashionable young gentleman who took me riding one day, and showed me several of the fine parks with which this city abounds, hinted very broadly that 'my precious life was almost wasted trying to teach the "canaille," when I was fitted to adorn the highest circles,' but I launched into such a glowing description of some of my brightest boys and girls, that he was turned off from his subject. 'You are quite a Professorine, Miss Harmon,' he said, 'and are as enthusiastic over your pupils as some of our fashionable ladies are over a new and be-

coming toilet.' Seriously, the gentleman's attentions annoy me somewhat, though ladies of my acquaintance envy me the distinction. I have smelled wine on his breath. What can he discover in your quiet little Anna, whose tastes are so entirely different, that he should seek her society so persistently?"

"Dear child! Her very unconsciousness is one of her charms," said the mother, as she finished reading the letter, and the pure, sweet face of the absent daughter came before her. "I do not wonder that a world-wearied man should find a charm in her fresh, young beauty; but he may spare himself the trouble of trying to win her."

Willie and Walter Platte, meanwhile, were members of the clergyman's family, where Walter's conscientious work gave every one pleasure, and Willie's generous, faulty nature was a constant trouble to all who loved him. He was not vicious nor wilful, but seemed to drift into doubtful ways with every cross current.

Rose Harmon's occasional letters seemed like a bracing, healthful breeze to set all right, and he did not drift far away. Marie Le Blond, in her new role as adviser and helper of her grandfather, was developing also under other influences. The mission-school work

caused her to study the Book a great deal, and its heavenly teaching was better than that of the best schools. Miss Aubrey had become deeply interested in the intelligent girl, and brought her many books on various subjects, which were eagerly read. But the work to which Miss Aubrey was so devoted was of more interest than all else.

"It is so strange, Miss Aubrey," she said, "that when any one can see the change which comes over people as soon as they begin to read the Bible, they can think it is an imposture. Grand-pere never says that now. People who come to chapel services and study the Bible do not haunt the saloons any more. And they come up out of their rags and squalor and are nice and respectable. I do not understand how any one can hate the Bible."

"There are two powers in the world—good and evil—and there is warfare always," Miss Aubrey replied. "Every human being is on one side or the other, though some people fancy that they occupy neutral ground. There is no such ground, my dear. The Bible is our grand Armory, where all the weapons we need may be found. And its teachings are spreading over all the earth. The effect is everywhere the same. People and nations are lifted upward, and are

happier and more prosperous as they take the Book of God for their guide. You and I are happy enough in our humble work, for we are workers together with Him."

"I do not ask any better place," said Marie earnestly. "I am one of them, you know, and the people will listen to me, for I can tell them how the Saviour helps me. And they know how much you leave to come down and help them, just as the Master did. If the law-makers would only close up the drinking-places, it would be so much easier to help people."

"Yes, that is our great discouragement, Marie. The law protects the places where crime and poverty are bred. But brighter days are dawning. In some States no one is licensed to sell strong drink. The tempted ones may go there, if they are not strong enough to resist,—only some of them; most of them are too poor and have no wish to escape."

"I have noticed that, Miss Aubrey. The worst victims do not know their danger. They say they 'can drink or let it alone,' and they drink, but do not let it alone."

"The poison must be put out of the way," said Miss Aubrey earnestly. "It is the same deadly foe that it was thousands of years ago. Righteous rulers will never license such a destructive evil."

"I cannot see how men dare to do it. It is a sin against God," said Marie.

"Yes, and for that reason, and because it is a sin against humanity, it will be put away," said Miss Aubrey. "The women of the country are organizing for the work, and when their hearts are enlisted, things move, you know."

"Oh, Miss Aubrey, you remember our dear friends the Harmons?" said Marie. "They invite us to spend a week with them in the country. I never saw the country. Isn't it charming? Just like the parks, only so large."

"It is charming in summer, Marie, but not at all like our parks. You must see the woods and fields for yourself, dear. You will go?"

"Perhaps, when summer comes again. I would like to see little Sunshine. Wasn't she an angel, and always so happy when she was doing good. How happy she will be to know that our mission work is so prosperous. We owe you so much, Miss Aubrey."

"No; we owe all to Him whom we serve. There are several of my young friends who are coming to help in this work. I do not wonder at it. It is the very work that Jesus left His throne to do, and we can never reach a higher place than following in His footsteps."

CHAPTER XIII.

ANNA'S LETTER.

THE young teacher's letters from the great Western city were eagerly welcomed in the Harmon cottage, where the coming of winter brought stillness and quiet.

"Life is such a busy whirl with me," Anna wrote, "that the weekly coming of the home letter is as welcome as a seat at your fireside would be. You will be glad to know that my pupils are as interesting as ever. The colored boy still leads all his classes, but he is so merry and kind-hearted that no one seems to envy him. I have been reading an old-fashioned book, one of the immortals—'Uncle Tom's Cabin'—and I ask myself, 'Can it be that less than half a century ago such a barbarous thing as slavery existed, and that my boy Martin belongs to that once-despised race?' Then the question comes again: Is there not a more terrible slavery to-day? That was dreadful, indeed; but what is this? American slavery injured only the slave and his master, and there were palliations. In-

temperance claims its victims from every class and reaches its octopus arms around the world. It has cast its deadly shadow over our lives, my mother, and I hate it in proportion as I love God and humanity. Some of my pupils have come into the school-room under the influence of liquor. How it made my heart ache! But it helped me to see that I had not done my whole duty. Now we have our 'Honor Roll' handsomely framed on the wall of the school-room, and most of my pupils' names are written under the triple pledge against 'strong drink, profanity, and tobacco.' They are a loving triplet, you know. So I hope that though I cannot do any great work for the cause I love, I do help a little. 'What is the use in standing up for the right in this great, wicked city?' one of the teachers said to me. 'We have never only our own little corner to control.' I answered, 'And each one of these true boys and girls will, by and by, control a corner.' There is much Christian work going on in this great, wicked city. The daily prayer-meeting in Farwell Hall, in the very centre of traffic; the woman's temperance work, and the work of all the churches. One finds what he seeks everywhere, either good or evil. Do you think I am trying to state an axiom? Can it be that spring is near, and that

in a few weeks more I shall see you again? Then I can tell you much that I will not venture to write; only, dearest mother, have no fears for Mr. Lester. He is polished, gentlemanly, and very wealthy. But he turns up his aristocratic nose at the temperance work, cares nothing for the Bible, and uses wine for his 'often infirmities.' Some of my young lady friends express themselves strongly that I, a poor teacher, should decline the attentions of so elegant a gentleman. I must tell you, dear ones, of a delightful feature in Chicago life. Woman can fill places of trust and responsibility if she proves worthy. And there are eloquent speakers and artists and successful business women, and all that. It is against the ancient traditions, I know, but 'Nothing succeeds like success,' and brave women are finding their work and place. For all cannot occupy the 'sphere' that the wise men would accord them. We are so much in the majority, you see; but, though all cannot be wives or mothers, they may be homemakers, and I am glad. Oh, the world is going forward, and the great mother-heart of love to humanity will find plenty of work everywhere in this sad, sorrowful world despite the croakers."

Mrs. Harmon was silent for some moments after reading this letter. She and Rose had

been sitting before the open grate listening to the sighing of the wind and the drip of the melting snow. Rose, as usual, had been looking at the bright side of even this dismal spring day. The fire was so bright and sociable, making new pictures constantly; so chatty with its low, soft murmurings, and even the drip of the snow told of the coming of the spring. And now Anna's letter added another ray to the brightness.

"I am so glad, mamma, that we shall hear no more of Mr. Lester," she said at last. "I do not like him at all, and I am glad that Anna does not."

"Anna shows good sense in her decision," said Mrs. Harmon. "She must change greatly, and not for the better, before she could be happy with such a man. And, no doubt, he thinks it was a great condescension for him to ask a poor teacher to be his wife."

"Condescension for him to seek Anna!" said Rose indignantly. "But we needn't fear him now. Anna loves her work so well I do not believe she will ever marry."

"It looks so, and I am very glad she loves her work. There is no grander work than that of teacher, and one's heart must be in it if he makes it a success."

But the home-coming of Anna at the long summer vacation caused Mrs. Harmon to change her opinion. She noted that while Anna's love for her work was no less, a name which she had not known sometimes was spoken in her descriptions of life in her Western home.

"I must introduce you to my friend Mr. Brown," she said to her mother when they chanced to be alone. "No, I don't intend to give up teaching at present, but Mr. Brown thinks he can persuade me to do so sometime. 'Do I care for him?' you ask. I respect and esteem him more than any one else, and he has his way to make in the world, as I have. If the time comes when we decide to work together, may we not have your approval and blessing, my mother?"

Mrs. Harmon's eyes were filled with tears. She was thinking of the time when Francis Harmon, his heart full of hope and enthusiasm, had persuaded her to share his brilliant prospects. And the life had been so happy, though the prospects were not fulfilled.

"Your heart and judgment must dictate, dearest Anna," she said. "Not even your mother would dare to interfere in this matter. I have full confidence in you, my daughter, that you

will not choose unworthily, and I can only ask that your life may be as happy as mine was with husband and children about me."

She did not even allude to the sad ending, though the beloved life went out from them in the very room in which they were sitting.

Just here Rose came into the room with her arms full of papers.

"Sister Anna, you used to admire my artificial flowers," she said, coming to her sister's side. "I have been trying to copy flowers in another way," and she spread before her sheet after sheet of the wild flowers which grew around their home, copied so accurately that Anna said delightedly :

"You are a genius, Sunshine, and you must give me these to take away from home with me."

"Do you like them, then?" Rose said, her face covered with smiles. "Then here are the garden flowers," and she displayed roses, lilies, lilacs, pinks, and pansies. "I sent some of these to Willie and Walter Platte, and they—flattered me," she said with a bright blush. "You wouldn't do that, sister; and oh, I am so happy with my brush. I love it even better than making the artificial flowers that I used to enjoy making so much."

"Rose has a decided talent, mamma," Anna said soberly.

"It is not a thing to be vain over, little Sunshine, because it is a gift from a loving Friend, but is needful that it be cultivated. I wish you might have a good instructor. I know you would be careful and painstaking, dear."

"I don't know why I should be vain," said Rose. "But I may be glad that you all like what I enjoy doing so much. And is it a gift?"

"Everything we have is a gift," said Mrs. Harmon. "Your sister has a gift for teaching, but she could not paint like you. And she had to cultivate her gift. So if we can secure a teacher, we will see what improvement you can make."

The color came into Rose's face, and her eyes shone like stars.

"I don't know anything, but oh, it will be so nice to learn," she said. "But it will take money," she added, "and that isn't so easy to get."

"I will be responsible for that," said Anna, "and I will venture a prophecy. We are to have an artist in our family, and one day she will paint some of the pictures which I have seen, and which I so much wished to be able to copy."

The summer vacation was a busy time with the inmates of the cottage. Mrs. Platte with her two sons came on to spend several weeks, and there were daily junketings among the young people and pleasant, cozy chats among the elders, for Mrs. Platte was in declining health, and the restful quiet of the cottage was most grateful to her. Anna divided her time between the restless young spirits, who never seemed to tire, and the quieter pleasures of the elders. When a rainy day intervened she told the young people tales of the great city by the inland sea, which had developed, within the memory of some who were yet living, from a fort and trading-post for the Indians to a magnificent city with a cordon of beautiful parks like a necklace of jewels and such fine schools.

"Sister Anna is so in love with the West that I am afraid," said Rose. "Don't you think she is Westernized, Willie?"

"I think she is equal to Aunt Amelia for story-telling," he answered, "and I am greatly interested in the city, which I have often read about. They do say that the people, getting tired of the muddy streets, picked the whole town up four feet higher and carted in soil from the prairie to fill up the streets. But that was a Munchausen, wasn't it, Miss Anna?"

"That is a fact, Willie. Sometimes I think men can do whatever they set themselves at in right good earnest, and Western people have plenty of energy."

"It must be grand to begin with nothing and build up great fortunes, as many of those fellows have done," said Willie.

"There are things much nicer than that," said Rose earnestly.

"And what may that be, Miss Rose?" asked Willie, who did not venture to use the pet name for his young friend now.

"The work that Miss Aubrey and Marie Le Blond are doing," she answered; "picking people up from worse than mud—people, instead of houses, you know—and teaching them to be good and happy."

"You are right, dear little Sunshine," said Anna, "and I am sorry to say there is plenty of that sort of mud in our beautiful city even yet. It needs more than machinery to lift people up from beer-guzzling, rum-drinking, and wine-tipping to the solid ground. Love and law must work together for that."

"Do you know, Walter, that we expect Marie Le Blond next week?" said Rose, turning to the lad, who was listening attentively.

"Love and law," he said absently, "that is

it"; then recalling himself, he answered: "Do you, indeed? That will be nice."

"Walter's wits are off wool-gathering, don't you see, Miss Anna?" said Willie, laughing gaily. "He is cut out for a great philanthropist, and anything of that sort just takes him—'love and law' to make the world go right. That isn't a bad idea; but what Miss Rose tells us interests me more. The little French girl is a very interesting character."

Walter looked up quizzically. When Willie put on his grown-up manners it amused his brother greatly, but he was too amiable to chaff him, and only said:

"It will be nice to meet Marie and to hear of the mission school."

CHAPTER XIV.

OLD FRIENDS.

THE coming of Marie Le Blond was the signal for new pleasures among the gay young people at the Harmon cottage. She met a most cordial welcome, and as she had never seen the country before, each one felt in duty bound to show her its beauties. The moss-covered rocks, the musical brook, and the trees of the woodland interested her more than all else, and there were daily picnics in some secluded spot, where, seated under the leafy shade on the emerald carpet, they talked of their past and made plans for the future.

"If Jamie were only with us," said Rose on one of these days, "we should be entirely happy."

"There is always an 'if' in the way of perfect happiness," said Miss Anna, who had been persuaded to become one of the party.

"And Mr. Harmon is a man of business now," said Marie. "Any one can see how much he is trusted. He has been offered new situations, but he stays by the old firm."

"I am glad," said Anna. "We talk with him by the weekly letters, and it is so pleasant to hear of his welfare. But what of Miss Aubrey?"

"She is an angel," said Marie. "Even grand-pere says so, and she grows more beautiful every day. She spends all her time among the poor, and they love her so. She never needs a policeman to go with her into the worst places, for she has friends everywhere."

"And, Marie Le Blond," said Anna, "how does she know all this?"

"Miss Aubrey permits me to go with her," said Marie. "Isn't she kind? Then you have no idea, Miss Anna, how our little place has improved, or what a fine business we have. We have two rooms now, and our ice-creams, and fruit-ices, and tea and coffee bring in so many people that often I have to employ helpers. It all seems like a dream sometimes when I think of only a year ago."

"You must tell mamma all this; it will make her very happy," said Anna. "But Willie and Walter have not yet told us what they are doing. We will all be glad to hear."

"How can you be so hard-hearted, Miss Anna, when we have only one more week of freedom. Our good old Prex is all right, and I

hope we'll be as good men as he ; but oh, the Greek roots and Latin conjugations ! They are just horrible !”

“How can you say so, Willie, when we have such grand fun,” said Walter. “I think it is a pity the Latin is a dead language, because one word says so much more than our English words do. I like the Latin and try to like Greek, and I love our good tutor ; he is one of the best of men.”

A lively chattering among the tree-tops interrupted the conversation here, and down into their midst fell a half-fledged robin. Looking up they saw a squirrel hanging from an upper limb of the tree directly over a nest of young robins. The parent birds were darting back and forth, screaming angrily at the destroyer which hung over their home, while the callow birdlings were fluttering away for safety.

“Cruel, wicked creature !” Rose cried, her eyes filling with tears. “How can you ? I shall never, never like to hear you chatter again.”

“Is it that pretty, innocent-looking creature that frightens the little birds so ?” Marie said, “and I was just thinking how musical his voice was.”

“It's the way of the world,” said Willie loft-

ily. "The strong prey upon the weak always and everywhere."

"Where did you learn that horrid lesson, Willie?" said Walter. "I do not believe it is true."

"Neither do I believe it, Walter," said Rose. "That would be a dreadful world to live in."

"You do not live in it," said Marie gravely, "but it is all around you. You try to help others, but most people care first for themselves. I've seen so much of it, and I do not know as we ought to expect better things of a poor little squirrel."

Miss Anna had been listening to this grave talk. Now she said :

"I am afraid that what Willie says is true, Walter, but we will do what we can to make things different. It is much pleasanter, too, to look on the bright side ; we are happier and make others happier."

It was certainly a broad view of the "bright side" which Marie enjoyed during the week which she spent at Harmon cottage, and she went back to her duties much brighter and happier than before.

The cottage was almost lonely, for the Plattes went away soon, and only the prospect of Jamie's visit remained. That, too, came and went

so swiftly that it seemed more dream than reality.

Jamie, the brisk, wide-awake boy, was developing into the courteous young gentleman without losing a whit of the frank, generous nature which was his chief charm as a boy. He was delighted with his little sister's paintings, and said :

"Some day you will go to Rome and study the great masters."

And she laughingly replied :

"Yes, when my ship comes in."

"And, Anna, I shall not allow you to pay all the bills for this little girl's instruction," he said. "She must have the best, and I shall insist on bearing my share."

"You are all so kind, so very kind, and I—I will try and not disappoint you," Rose said, her blue eyes filled with tears.

How well she fulfilled the promise when Jamie and Anna had returned to their work ! It was such a joy to revel—it seemed like that—amid paints and brushes, and to know that a careful instructor and critic would overlook her work.

"It is better to be scolded than praised, if it will only help us to do better work, mamma," she said to Mrs. Harmon when her teacher had criticised what she had greatly admired.

“You are right, daughter,” her mother replied, “and I suppose my eyes need educating as well as your fingers; and proud as I am of what you have done, I hope you will do far better work.”

CHAPTER XV.

ANNA TAKES A NEW SCHOOL.

ANNA HARMON had held a position in the public schools of the great and growing city two years. They had been years of growth and development for herself as well as of all her surroundings, and now she was debating a question which comes to most women at some time in their lives. Should she leave the field where she had been so successful, where she had aided in shaping the lives of hundreds for the narrow sphere of a home? "Narrow sphere!" She felt reproved at the very thought. Was not the Christian home one of the strong pillars of the State? And he who asked her to aid him in making such a home was noble and good and true. She had never cared for any one as she cared for him. She remembered her own home, the gentle and courteous father, whom all had regarded as the central sun. The night of death had veiled its light, but he was never forgotten. Anna was not at all romantic. The realities of life had closed around her too early to permit

her to indulge in flights of fancy. She was not beautiful, and some had wondered at the infatuation of the elegant Mr. Lester. The proudest dames of the city would gladly have accepted the honor which the modest little teacher declined. There was a nameless grace hovering about her which made her a most welcome addition to any circle, yet it would be as hard to define it as it was to understand why she accepted the attentions of the busy tradesman instead of those of the wealthy man of leisure. "If there were no homes what a world this would be!" This was the thought which came to Anna as she sat in her room awaiting the ring of the door-bell which she had learned so well.

"There it goes this minute," she said, and there was a slight flush on her fair cheek when Mr. Brown came into the room.

He came forward with a quiet, self-possessed air, and, though he retained the little hand which she extended to him a little longer than was needful, he seemed calm and self-controlled. It was this very self-control which had made him the successful business man, though it must be confessed that his quietness now was assumed. "Would she give him a favorable answer?" was the question. "She was a part of his very life. He needed her so much. What would all his

financial successes amount to if she did not share them?" were the thoughts rapidly revolving through his brain. But he said very quietly :

"I have come for my answer, Anna, and I believe it will be yes."

The color deepened on Anna's cheek as she said :

"There are so many things to think of, Mr. Brown. Did I ever tell you that my father was a native of Germany and that one of my cherished hopes has been to look upon his early home?"

Mr. Brown was about to interrupt her, but she continued rapidly :

"I have a dear sister, an artist, who hopes another year she will be able to visit the old world to look upon the work of the masters and the home of our dear father, and she hopes that I may go with her."

"Anna, if you consent to be my wife, do not think I shall try to restrict your liberty," Mr. Brown said earnestly. "Will you tell me more about this artist sister?"

"You know, Mr. Brown, that we all have been obliged to make our way, and Rose, with only a little assistance from us, has done such good work that she is teacher in the art department

in several schools. She is quite a marvel, and not at all vain or conceited, and she hopes soon to be able to carry out her plans. Think of it! A European tour for young working-girls! Preposterous! do you say?"

"Bravo! I say. If any one deserves that pleasure, it is she who has earned it," said Mr. Brown.

"But this may be a long time in fulfillment," said Anna, "and, Mr. Brown, you know I have been fairly successful in my school-work. Is it right for me to leave it? That, after all, is the question."

"If there were no one else to do the work, I should say no," said Mr. Brown; "but there are many teachers, and the place I ask you to fill could be filled by no other, my dear."

"Flatterer!" Anna exclaimed.

But from the look which stole into her face her suitor took heart and plead his cause so successfully that the school lost a teacher and Mr. Brown gained a home.

It was a modest cottage looking out upon one of the gem-like parks which adorn the city, and it was a haven of rest to the busy toiler, who laid aside the thought of business when he came within the charmed circle of home.

In the Harmon cottage, a thousand miles

away, they were talking over the matter. The room was filled with paintings and studies, but Rose had laid aside the brush and was dreaming over Anna's letter.

"It seems so strange, mamma," she said to Mrs. Harmon, who was busily sewing at another window; "Anna loved teaching so well, and was such a teacher. How could she give it up? And doesn't it seem strange to think of Anna's home? I can almost see it."

"I hope we may all look upon it some day," said Mrs. Harmon. "Anna loved teaching, and I think she will love home-making quite as well. It is one of the fine arts which only woman can excel in. And, my darling," she added in a lower tone, "it is very restful when a strong, true, human arm is given for our support. Mr. Brown will help rather than hinder Anna in her work for the Master."

"There is nothing sweeter than that," said Rose. "Much as I love my work, I never saw happier hours than those spent in the old tenement-house, where we could help those who needed help so much. And dear Mrs. Platte, how kind she was, and how sad to think of her early death and the broken home! I had never even thought it possible that Mr. Platte could lose his fortune. Willie used to say, 'How

jolly it would be to make one's own fortune !' Now he will have the opportunity."

"It is a changeful world, Rose. Years ago, in this very room, where your father lay cold in death, all seemed so dark. But God has been a Father to us all. Jamie is such a helper to us, and is making such a noble, Christian man ; Anna is happy ; and you, Rose, have been my little Sunshine always."

Rose threw her arms around her mother's neck, saying :

"The best of mothers ought to have good children." Then she said : "Willie's last letter tells me that Walter thinks there is nothing like the ministry, and that he hopes some day to be settled as a minister of the Gospel in that mission chapel where Miss Aubrey and Marie are doing such grand work."

"I hope it may come true," said Mrs. Harmon. "He always seemed so eager to help when any project for doing good was started. To lift up the fallen and to help the helpless would be just the work that would please him. I am glad to hear it, and I hope I may live to see the day when he will be settled there."

CHAPTER XVI.

REMORSE—WILLIE FINDS A FRIEND.

Two young men were seated in one of the gloomy rooms of the time-honored — College, which has graduated so many noble men, and, alas! has witnessed the wreck of many more. The necessity of choice between right and wrong which confronts us every day of our lives is not left outside of the college walls.

It is not difficult to recognize in the young men seated at the table the handsome, kind-hearted Willie and the pure, true-hearted Walter of our story. There is a troubled look on Willie's face,—a look habitual with him, it must be confessed,—for, from his first entrance into college, a conflict has been going on between the higher and the lower powers of his nature, and the right has not always triumphed. On the one hand, Rose Harmon's weekly letters have been a strong, healthful tonic and inspiration. He has rejoiced in her successes, and made frequent resolves that she should not be disappointed in her high hopes for him. Then the

pall of sorrow has fallen upon the home and the loving mother has been called away, leaving the message, "Tell my dear boys I shall wait for them in heaven." Financial reverses, too, have fallen heavily on Mr. Platte, and the young men know that when their college course is completed, they must go on unaided in the battle of life. This last misfortune seemed the lightest of all to Walter, who had learned to rest on the Arm of Strength, who fully believed what he read so often, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Willie styles his young brother his "guardian angel," and the prayers of the guardian angel are constantly ascending for the dear brother who is so infirm of purpose. For, on the other hand, the class of dashing young students who often have lured Willie away to surreptitious wine-suppers, card parties, and forbidden pleasures have left their mark. Nothing can be more false than that we are entirely independent of our surroundings. Whether we approve or disapprove of our associates, we grow like them. True, Willie did not approve of the course of young Fairbanks, a fellow-student and one of his early friends; but his plea of "'Twill be such a jolly lark, and there is no harm in it," had often led him into scenes which he deeply regretted. Fair-

banks had gone too far and had been expelled, and the letter of Mr. Platte, alluding to the disgrace, said :

“ Do not allow any false notions of pleasure to lead you into what a life of repentance cannot remedy. I am working hard to enable you to complete your college course, my son. You will not, I am sure, disappoint your loving father.”

This was what troubled Willie to-night ; he was so heartily ashamed of his weak, vacillating course. He had not failed in his examinations ; he had worked faithfully ; and, alas ! had lapsed woefully. Why had not the disgrace of expulsion fallen on him ? He had partaken with Fairbanks in some of his mad riots. He deserved disgrace as well as Fairbanks. And there was Edwards,—the brilliant young student, the minister’s son,—what shameful scenes he had followed him into ! And, much as he despised himself and Edwards, should he ask him even now to join in some of his “ pleasures,” he feared that he should consent. He was not sure of himself even when he fully decided to “ right about face.” That was the hardest of all. Walter, turning over his books with an earnest, inquiring look, knew nothing of the trouble which was seething in Willie’s breast,

until, chancing to look up suddenly, he encountered his dark, pleading eyes fixed upon him.

"Why, Will, what is the matter?" he cried, closing the book suddenly and turning toward him.

"I," he answered—"I am the trouble. If it were anybody else, I could bear it."

Walter's puzzled look reminded Willie that he was speaking in riddles.

"Read that," he said, giving him Mr. Platte's letter. "He has confidence in me. Bah! I hate myself!"

But Walter, deep in the perusal of his father's letter, did not hear the words he was saying.

"Poor, dear father!" he said when he had finished reading the letter. "All alone and working so hard for us. No wonder you look sad, Willie; but we will do our very best, and by and by we will care for him."

"It isn't that, Walter, though it's too beastly bad that father must lose all his money and be brought down to work in his old age. I wouldn't mind work myself, if I only could depend on myself; but the worst of it all is, I can't do it.

"Oh, Walter, you talk as if I were clean and pure like yourself, but you aren't blind, though

you do try to be. You know I've been in no end of scrapes and deserve to be bounced, almost as much as Fairbanks did."

Walter buried his face in his hands and made no reply.

"There it is again. The fellows use such words and they slip out before I know it. But don't sit there in that fashion, Walter. Scold if you want to ; I deserve it."

"If you only could learn to say no, Willie. If you only would keep clear from that Edwards set," said Walter in a pleading tone.

"But Edwards' father is a D.D.," replied Willie in a mocking tone. "Can you ask for me any better associate than a minister's son?"

"A bad minister's son is worse than another bad man," said Walter, "for he is a renegade."

What is that rare "chance" which brings people of whom you are thinking and talking before us? A slight tap at the door and a well-known voice is heard :

"Will Mr. Platte honor us with his company for an hour?"

"No, Edwards, it is impossible ; I am engaged," said Willie with firmness.

Young Edwards went his way to talk over with his comrades, while discussing a bottle of wine, Willie Platte's new "fad."

"It's all owing to that puritanical brother of his, I'll be bound."

Meanwhile, "that brother of his" was saying "thank God" in his heart.

Willie laid aside the mocking vein as the echo of Edwards' footsteps died away, and said seriously :

"I am ashamed, Walter, that you, my younger brother, are so much stronger than I. I cannot understand it. We know just where we will find you always, and I, you know, am an uncertain quantity."

"May I speak plainly, dear brother, though I am younger than you?"

"Speak on, brother," said Willie.

"You have forgotten to read, or to heed, one of the most important passages in the Word of God."

"What is it?"

"'Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' That is what Christ himself said."

"Well, I never did notice that command," said Willie. "It is a command, you see, and it bids us seek a kingdom. Rather a large venture, I should say. What is the kingdom of God?"

"Why, Willie, the Bible says, don't you know,

that it is 'righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' I heard a great preacher say that righteousness was rightness, and we choose that, don't we?"

"You do, Walter, always; with me the question is not answered so easily."

Walter continued, unheeding the interruption:

"Because when we choose the right, we have peace. That is the best of all—the peace of God. And there is something more—the joy. Oh, Willie, if you only would seek, you would surely find, and then we should be so happy."

"See here, Walter, this is all plain to you," said Willie soberly; "to me it is all fog and mist. I believe the Bible is a revelation from God, but this 'kingdom of God within you'—it isn't in me, I'm sure. Huxley says: 'If some great power would agree to make me think what is true and do what is right on condition of being turned into a sort of clock and wound up every morning, I should instantly close with the offer.' Now, if I could wrestle for it, or run a race, or buy such a character,—no, I couldn't do that; we are poor now; but—I wish I were a true Christian; such a one as you are, for father's sake, and—for the sake of little Sunshine."

"No, dear Willie, do not look at my poor life," said Walter with deep feeling. "We have one perfect pattern, and only one—the God-man, Jesus. Let us follow Him. He has said, 'Seek and ye shall find,' and with the kingdom of God in your heart and the King for your friend, all the worry and trouble would be gone."

The brothers talked long and earnestly, and then knelt together in prayer. For the first time the wayward Willie, feeling his need of help, prayed, and the word so often read, yet so little known, 'My peace I give unto thee,' became a conscious experience.

Walter wrote the joyful news to his brother's dearest friends, for Willie was yet distrustful of himself. Yet the One who is infinitely wise and strong, to whom he committed his case, guided him safely.

When Willie Platte, who had been dubbed "the prince of good fellows," avowed his purpose henceforth to devote his life to his Divine Lord, there was great excitement in the circle which he left.

"It is all very well," Edwards said as he puffed his cigarette. "Every one expects to attend to that sort of thing some day; but, to think of such a royal fellow as Will Platte mak-

ing a monk of himself before he has fairly tasted of the pleasures of life, is too preposterous."

It did not seem quite so "preposterous" to the young gentleman when a month later, for persistent violation of the rules, he was granted leave of absence from the institution and knew that the shadow of "expelled from college" must rest on all his future life.

It was not a holiday task which Willie had undertaken. He felt the covert sneers which met him often from those who had been his ardent friends. He met also a cordial greeting and words of encouragement from many whose friendship he had not before possessed. But the best of all was the absence of the torturing consciousness that he was acting unworthily; that to those who reposed confidence in his integrity he had been traitorous.

"I shall feel better when I have made a clean breast of it," he said to Walter, and his next letter to his father contained a full confession of all his faults and lapses of integrity.

He told him of his purpose to devote his future life to the service of God, and Mr. Platte gave a great sigh of relief. Though a nominal Christian, he had never realized a Christian's resources. Yet Willie's letter awoke a new train of thought. With the Eternal One for his

friend and guide the son, who had caused him so much anxiety, would be safe.

Rose Harmon also received a letter, over which she shed many joyful tears. The kind, generous lad who had brought her the beautiful flowers long ago had never lost the place which he won in the young girl's heart. She saw all that was noble and true in his character and she saw his weakness also. She believed him, too, when he said :

"I need you, little Sunshine. Your letters help me more than you know."

And she had written to him faithfully all the years, and now he had found the Friend.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE EUROPEAN TOUR.

“Two young American girls making the tour of Europe alone!” exclaimed Lady Bambury, a withered specimen of English aristocracy, in horrified accents. “Really, it is hard to imagine what these Americans will not attempt to do.”

Lady Bambury and her daughter Miss Ethel were returning from New York, where they had made some investments, and the monotony of a sea voyage was relieved by watching the young Americans, to whom the experience was new and delightful.

“One of them is a married lady, mamma,” said Miss Ethel, “and that golden-haired young girl who is sketching is an artist. They are evidently ladies.”

This seemed to be the impression the sisters made everywhere. Quiet and self-possessed always, they followed the beaten track of European travel, asking information when needful, which Rose’s command of German and French made very easy.

“How very kind and obliging every one is!” said Rose, not dreaming that her sweet face and winning manner made it a pleasure to aid the fair young travellers.

They lingered long and lovingly in the picture galleries of which Rose had often dreamed, drank in the beauty of the Swiss lakes and mountains, and at last found themselves in the little town where their loved father first looked upon the world.

The news spread quickly through the town that the daughters of Charles Harmon had come from far-off America to look upon their father's birthplace. Then, for the first time in all their wanderings, Anna and Rose began to feel at home.

With true German hospitality the people who had known their father flocked around them, offering to escort them to the scenes familiar from their father's descriptions, inviting them to their homes, and giving them many delightful experiences.

All these Rose wrote faithfully to the dear mother at home and the friend who followed her wanderings in a Western State, where “the government of the people by the people” does not license snares and pitfalls for their destruction.

The home-coming was near at hand, when the young advocate hoped to win his case and the years of letter-writing should give place to something better.

Walter meanwhile had taken orders, and had under his charge a church ready and willing to share with him all his broad schemes of benevolence. The work upon which he had entered filled and satisfied his soul. He could draw at pleasure from the limitless fields of Divine truth for the instruction of the people, who listened eagerly to the words of the young rector, who seemed at times like one inspired.

Among his most attentive hearers Walter noted from Sabbath to Sabbath a beautiful young girl whose dark eyes told of a heartfelt sorrow. There was something about the face strangely familiar, yet he could not recall the time or place which haunted him.

A guild in his church did much mission work in the haunts of poverty and vice in the lower parts of the city, and he often found his way to the homes of want and sorrow. On one of these visits he met his old friend Miss Aubrey, busied as was her wont in works of mercy. A young girl was with her, a stranger, whom Miss Aubrey introduced as "one of my helpers, Miss Agnes Darrow."

When Miss Darrow turned toward him, the young rector saw the beautiful, sad eyes which he had noted from Sabbath to Sabbath, and she, equally surprised, exclaimed :

“Our rector ! I am glad to meet you here.”

“Yes, Miss Darrow, and I should know you,” he answered, taking her extended hand. “I hope to know all my people soon ; but, my dear young lady, I think I have the solution of the riddle which has so perplexed me. ‘Where have I met you ?’ is the question which puzzled me as I have seen you every Sabbath in your pew. Now I have it. My little playmate, Aggie Darrow, away back in my childhood days.”

The young girl blushed. She, too, remembered those days, when little Walter Platte styled her “his little wife,” and they had played at housekeeping with toy china, and dolls for guests.

“Then you had quite forgotten your old playmate ?” she said archly. “I knew you the moment I saw you.”

“But you knew my name, and—there have been such changes. You had a sister Bertha, if I remember,—our grave mentor when we grew too boisterous at play ?”

The troubled look came back into Miss Dar-

row's eyes; the look which had so moved Walter Platte's sympathy.

"Yes, I had a sister," she said hesitatingly, "but—she has taken the veil."

The subject was evidently a very painful one, and Miss Aubrey turned the conversation by describing a sorrowful case which she was on her way to visit. "Would Mr. Platte call with her?" He assented, and Miss Darrow said :

"If you will excuse me now, Miss Aubrey, I will call and see Mrs. Dart and her helpless ones," and bowing, she turned into a narrow alley and was gone.

"Is it quite safe?" questioned Mr. Platte. "Dare you go alone to such places?"

"Never alone, since One is with us," she answered smiling. "Agnes Darrow is as fearless as a sunbeam and as welcome everywhere. She is such a helper in my work. She devotes her great wealth to doing good. And she has a great sorrow. After her mother's death Mr. Darrow, too busy in hoarding up riches to care for his motherless girls, placed them in a convent. He died in the midst of his planning, leaving a large fortune. Half of it goes with Bertha to the church which she entered, for she never left the convent, and dear Agnes is using her fortune going about doing good. She

is a 'King's Daughter,' and I love her very dearly."

They had now reached the room where the sick girl lay whom Miss Aubrey had come to visit. She looked up eagerly as they entered, then said :

"Where is Miss Agnes? Oh, Miss Aubrey, I do so want to hear her sing again

'Just as I am, without one plea,'

That is for me—my prayer."

"I have brought you one who can sing it—one of Christ's own messengers," said Miss Aubrey.

"He doesn't know all about me as Miss Agnes does, my wicked, wasted life," said the girl sadly.

"The Saviour does; the blessed Saviour," said Walter Platte. "He knows all about you and He loves you."

His voice was kind and earnest, as of one who knew the truth of the words he spoke.

The dying girl turned toward him :

"And can you sing the sweet hymn," she said,

 " 'Just as I am, and waiting not,
 To rid my soul of one dark blot' ?

Miss Agnes sang the words so sweetly and said they meant me."

A sweet, sympathetic voice was among the gifts which Walter Platte had laid at the feet of the Divine Master, and now he sang the words which have voiced the prayer of so many penitents. The closing lines were,

“O Lamb of God, I come.”

The sufferer lay with hands folded across her breast and a half smile on her lips.

“‘That taketh away the sins of the world,’ Miss Agnes said that, my sins which are so many,” she said half-whisperingly.

Some of the precious promises with which the Word of God abounds were spoken in her ear and she listened eagerly. Then an earnest prayer was offered, and the visitors took their leave.

“Remember, He said, ‘I will never leave thee,’” said Walter Platte, as they left the dying girl happy in her new-found hope.

“It must be a pleasure to the King’s Daughter if she knows how her words are remembered,” said Walter Platte.

“But my friend she is so unconscious of the great work she is doing,” said Miss Aubrey. “I cannot help contrasting her with her sister Bertha, who aspires to be a saint and shuts herself up in a convent. Agnes—dear, loving follower

of the Saviour—thinks she is doing so little, while she follows Him so closely.”

“None of us will know till eternity shall reveal what has been accomplished,” said Walter Platte, “but this very unconsciousness is the charm in a character like Miss Darrow’s.”

The work to which Walter Platte had devoted his life—the work of uplifting humanity—seemed more attractive than ever. He saw one who, with beauty, wealth, and personal attractions which would have made her a leader in the highest circles of society, choosing her place as minister to the lowest and most unfortunate, never shrinking even from the most vicious and degraded, if only they reached out their hands for help.

Unconsciously, a kind of worshipful reverence mingled with the warm regard with which Agnes Darrow inspired him. She came to him for counsel in her most difficult cases, told him of all the beams of brightness which came to her in her lowly work, of the young unfortunate whom the singing of the hymn,

“Just as I am, without one plea,”

had given hope, and of her happy death, trusting all in the hands of the Infinite Saviour.

The young rector did not tell her that he had

seen the dying girl. It was so pleasant to watch the bright face and the beaming eyes of the narrator, and he only said :

“ You have learned the ‘ happy secret,’ Miss Agnes. There is no greater happiness on earth than in winning lost ones back to safety and rest.”

“ It seems to me better than solitude and penance,” said Agnes. “ Poor Bertha ! If she would only try to help people I believe she would be happier, but she thinks I am all wrong.”

Miss Darrow had learned to confide her greatest sorrows to the kind rector.

“ The Bible is the only sure guide,” he answered. “ That teaches us to do good to all.”

“ One thing meets me everywhere,” said Miss Agnes, “ and it is such a cruel wrong,—the mischief done by the liquor-shops. How they rob the people ! It seems so cruel to license men to destroy men.”

“ It is the great problem of the age, Miss Darrow,” said the rector. “ The liquor traffic is strongly intrenched and controls legislation.”

“ Are there so many engaged in it, then ?” asked Agnes.

“ Not so many that true men cannot vote them down, but there is money in it, and

liquor-sellers decide how thousands of men shall vote."

"That is not good government,—low, vicious people making the laws for the good and true ones," said Agnes simply. "It is all wrong."

"And therefore it must be righted," said Walter Platte. "I remember our good old tutor used to tell us of the times when slavery stood where the liquor traffic stands now and all men were afraid. He felt the shame and sorrow for the nation's sin so deeply that he would cheerfully have laid down his life could he have seen it removed. But he trusted in God and he lived to see the curse removed. It cost more treasure than had ever been gained and the best blood of the nation. I believe this great wrong will be done away. God has infinite resources and His promises are sure."

"And we can work with Him," said Agnes brightly. "It is very little, to be sure, yet it is such a comfort to do the little things which fall in our way."

"She is one of His chosen messengers," was Walter Platte's thought, looking down into the earnest face. Aloud he said: "Yes, He does His work by human hands."

CHAPTER XVIII.

LIFE IN THE WEST.

IN a handsome law-office in a thriving Western city Willie Platte sits reading a letter with a foreign postmark. He has read it more than once before, for the writer is crossing the ocean now, and this will be his last letter until she reaches her native land. He calls her "little Sunshine" still, for her bright, trusting letters have been better than sunshine to him in his brave struggle to repair the mistake he made so long ago. The enemy he has fought is contraband here and can only be found by the initiated. No one dreams that the successful young lawyer has ever yielded to the power of the "mockers," for he is one of the foremost in all work for the uplifting of humanity.

Meanwhile, two weary travellers are straining their eyes to catch the first glimpse of the land which never before seemed so dear to them.

"I know now," said Anna, "the full meaning of those words,

'This is my own, my native land,'

and the kind, patient husband of mine will, I am sure, welcome the wanderers home."

"And dear mamma and Jamie," said Rose. "You do not forget them?"

"No, nor the young Western lawyer," Anna answered. "You are fully decided on making him happy, I suppose?"

"He thinks he needs me," said Rose, blushing brightly, "and I can trust him."

Their hearts beat high as they entered the harbor and saw the great city rising before them, but all was bustle and confusion, and not until they felt the strong arms of loved ones about them and kindly voices saying, "Don't trouble about anything; we'll see to all that," did they realize that they were home again and that Mr. Brown had left his business cares and Jamie had come down from his work to bid the wanderers "welcome home."

The tall young gentleman who held out his hand so cordially was "Willie's deputy," as he whispered in the ear of the blushing Rose, and the handsome, neatly dressed, young French girl, with her eyes filled with tears of joy, was the Marie Le Blond of the long ago.

It was a joyful meeting, and Rose exclaimed rapturously:

"We have enjoyed such a delightful sum-

mer, but the home-coming is the sweetest of all."

They were not forgetful of the one who was so eagerly watching their return in the New England village and Mr. Brown's stay must be short, so they hastened on, not even waiting to hear of the loved mission work or of Jamie's fine business prospects.

Again Mrs. Harmon clasped her daughters in her arms with a joy that atoned for the long months of absence. She welcomed her new son with generous warmth and thanked him for coming for his truant bride.

"I have known the pleasures of home long enough to be very happy to come for its mistress," he said, and then he told her the story of the months gone by in the busy Western city.

A successful business venture had made him a rich man.

Anna looked surprised, but not at all elated, and when he said, "I have bought a fine house on Prairie Avenue, and have only waited for you to decide about the furnishing," she exclaimed :

"Oh, Arthur, how could you ! We were so happy in the dear little cottage."

"Our Anna is not fond of fashionable gayeties," he said laughingly. "Would you believe

that she chose a humble tradesman for a husband instead of an elegant man of leisure, Mrs. Harmon? But, Anna, your old admirer has come to grief. He played heavily and drank deeply and has disappeared."

"I am so sorry," said Anna. "But how uncertain riches are! Isn't it safer to remain where we are safe and happy than to climb up to a dizzy height, only to tumble down again?"

"It is safer to let cards alone and to shun the wine-cup," said Mr. Brown. "But, Anna, in our new home we want the prettiest room furnished for your mother when we can persuade her to come to us."

"You are so kind and generous, Arthur, that it is comfortable to let you have your own way," said his wife. "If mamma would come to us how happy we would be!"

"Thank you, my dear children," said Mrs. Harmon. "Sometime, it may be, I shall be glad to come."

Rose in the silence of her own room was debating the question, "What answer should she give to the impetuous young gentleman whose letter lay before her? Should she prepare at once to leave the dear home and the work she loved so well? So many years they had all been toiling, and now, the goal reached, should

she leave all for an untried love and an untried home?"

But he needed her so. How pathetically he told of the years when the thought of her had enabled him to resist temptation, of the hope which had been his beacon-light through them all! Then the memory came back of the old tenement-house home and the frank, generous boy who had made the poor, crippled child's heart light. Those flowers—she could almost smell their perfume now.

In the midst of her busy thinking a tap at the door was heard and her mother entered.

"How did you know how much I needed you?" Rose said as she drew a chair to her side and gave her the letter.

Mrs. Harmon read it with mingled emotions. Was this the leading of the Hand which she daily craved? And must the home which all loved so well be given up? Surely nothing could be more cordial and generous than Mr. Brown's offer. But her "little Sunshine"! Here was the real question. Dare she trust her future with one who had proved himself unable to guide his own bark? True, he had now found the safe Pilot, but——

"I am waiting patiently, mamma," said Rose, and Mrs. Harmon answered:

"This is a question which your own heart must decide, darling. Mr. Platte has a noble, generous nature, but I wish he had stronger will-power."

"Yes; but, mamma, he is cultivating this and he is doing nobly. And then he is a Christian. The true Christian is always safe. I do care for him more than I could care for another, for I think I could help him. But is not my first duty here? How could I leave you, dearest mother—you who have devoted your life to us when we were so helpless?"

"It is the way of the world, dearest," said Mrs. Harmon with a smile. "The birdlings leave the home nest and build nests of their own."

Then she told of Mr. Brown's generous offer.

"But for the present," she said, "I shall remain in the old home and make it bright for Jamie, dear boy. He so enjoys coming home for a day's rest. And, Rose, I have only the farewell to say over again. If you choose to leave us, may God bless you and make you a blessing where you go."

"It is like tearing one's heart asunder," said Rose tearfully; "and—it is not that I choose to leave you, but that I must if I go to him."

Willie Platte sat alone in his office after the

throng which had filled it all the day had departed. Alone. What a luxury! And now he was at liberty to think. The fateful letter for which he had looked so anxiously had come at last, and—Rose had promised to be his. What calm and rest the letter had brought! He read it over again, dwelling on each word fondly.

“She trusts me, though I dare not trust myself,” he said aloud. “What if I should fail? God helping me, I will not,” and he clenched his fist.

Then his thoughts went back to the little crippled girl sitting in the sunshine, so happy with her flowers or whatever came to her. She had made life a success. Everywhere she had scattered joy and blessing, and now, an artist of no mean repute, she had consented to brighten his life.

“And I,” he said again, “my record only gives me pain. If I could only forget!”

But memory faithfully spread before him every detail of his college life, every mad prank which had seemed harmless, every glass of the treacherous wine which he had quaffed.

“If I had only taken my stand for the right when Walter and Miss Anna begged me to, I might have been spared all this,” he groaned, “but I can never forget!”

Then came the memory of the night when he and Walter knelt together in the dim college room and asked for help from the Almighty Friend. What peace had come to his troubled soul! And since that hour he had not felt his weakness. The Strong Arm pledged for his support had not once failed him.

"And never will," he said aloud as he drew the writing materials before him and proceeded to answer the letter.

Aunt Amelia has been quite forgotten in tracing the devious paths of our friends; but Walter, who now and then visits his loved aunt, and who corresponds with her always, knows the blessed work she is doing, and is happy in her successes. Many times she has been asked to preside over the home of some disconsolate widower or forlorn bachelor, and officious friends have descanted on the pleasures of home and of "having a strong arm to lean upon and some one to care for you, you know," but her answer has always been :

"It is all true, but there are plenty to fill those places, and I have enlisted in a cause which calls for all there is of me."

"You often speak," she said to Walter in one of her letters, "of the quietness and security of country homes and deplore the rush to the cities

where temptation meets one everywhere. I love the country, but, my dear Walter, we are by no means free from the guilt of the great curse of the nation. Sometimes I think that the springs of the river of death are here. In so many homes cider is provided as freely as water. What a shame to convert the rosy apple and the luscious peach into a beverage which is so deadly and destructive! And the domestic wines. Boys go out from country homes with a thirst kindled by these 'harmless beverages' which is as quenchless as the grave. But they sometimes graduate here. I wish I could paint for you a picture which I saw with my own eyes only a few days ago. It was on one of the loveliest hills, overlooking a valley where pleasant farm-houses and churches dotted the landscape, and I had been admiring the ferns and mosses and trailing vines which grew on every side. I was on my way to visit the family of a wretched drunkard which I had been told was very destitute, and I was thinking, 'How cool and sweet the woods are! Surely, one could be happy here.' Just at that moment a half-clothed child with ragged, elfin locks and piercing, black eyes darted across the road in front of me and disappeared in the bushes. Then I saw a thin smoke rising in that direction, and tying my horse, I

followed the child. Soon I came upon a rough board shanty with one window, the broken panes filled with rags, and the smoke which I had seen issuing from a stove-pipe which came through the roof. It was one of the homes (?) of the sovereign people—a drunkard's castle. I saw half a dozen scared faces peeping through the bushes, but I knocked, and hearing a faint 'Come in,' went boldly forward. A wan, wretched-looking woman sat on a broken chair; two little ones were lying in a wooden cradle covered by a ragged quilt; a table, a stove, and two or three chairs,—this was all the furnishing of the hovel. Will you think Aunt Amelia heartless, Walter, when I tell you the words that came into my mind looking at this picture, 'This is the house that rum built.' But I inquired if the little ones were sick, and the woman answered, 'No'm, but they hain't got no clothes, 'n' it's kinder chilly.' 'Chilly, I should think so, for half-naked children,' I thought as I looked at the gaping cracks between the boards. 'You don't live here in the winter-time?' I said as I opened the parcel of children's clothing which I had brought. The dull face brightened as the woman took the warm clothing, and she said, 'Thank 'e, mum; we stays here.' And this wretched hovel—with no

beds but heaps of straw, with no comforts but a cook-stove — was the home of ten children ! ‘There’s plenty o’ dead limbs and brush ’round, so we don’t freeze,’ she said apologetically. ‘Ef he’d only bring his wages home, we’d do very well. I sent word to the saloon-keeper that we was starvin’, ’n’ he said Hank could hev’ his drinks ’s long ’s he paid fur ’em ; ’n’ it’s purty hard lines.’ I did what I could for the wretched family, but the source of all their misery is the foe we are fighting. I have a class of fifty children pledged against strong drink, tobacco, and profanity—a trio of vices which combine lovingly. I have no fears that any of my boys will make such a home as I have described to you.”

“Human nature is the same everywhere,” he thought, “and Aunt Amelia finds the same foes in the country that we do in the city. I am so thankful for the work of our ‘King’s Daughters.’ The founding of this institution was an inspiration from God, and only He knows the good accomplished. The diet-kitchens, reading-rooms, and mission schools are doing so much for the poor people.”

Perhaps the young rector was not conscious of one source of the brightness which flooded his pathway.

“It was so pleasant to engage in such work with such helpers,” he put it; but if perchance one of these helpers happened for the time to be absent, all seemed changed.

He called on Miss Darrow after such a disappointment to report to her a case in which she was especially interested, and found her too much indisposed to venture out.

The real concern he manifested at finding her slightly ill brought a flush of pleasure to Agnes Darrow’s cheek and a new revelation of himself to the young rector. But he spoke of the work in which they were engaged and of their fellow-worker in the country.

He read to her the letter which had interested him so much, and Miss Darrow said:

“Thank you. It has done me good. I hope some day I may meet her. She is engaged in the same work and seems like a sister.”

Then Walter Platte told her briefly of the sorrow which had so changed Aunt Amelia’s life. The young girl’s eyes were filled with tears as he finished the story, and she said:

“She makes many lives beautiful because her own life was made sad. So she brings light out of darkness.”

On his way homeward a new train of thought awoke in the young rector’s mind. He had

been so happy in his work that he had not paused to think that much of his pleasure was due to the help and sympathy of this "King's Daughter." Would it be presumption if he should ask this lovely girl to be his life helper? The tidings of Willie's engagement had given him so much pleasure. With "Sunshine" by his side, he would have no more fears for him; but did not he, too, need the brightness which one had diffused over his life? Then the selfishness of the thought struck him.

"But I would try to make her happy," he said half aloud as he drew near his boarding-house.

It is an unexplained mystery that mind often influences another mind though far away. Is there an invisible highway for thought, a communion of souls, though the "earthly house" they occupy may be widely separated?

Certainly, Agnes Darrow's thoughts were occupied by her visitor long after he had taken his departure. The innocent love of childhood had in the past year given place to a reverential regard which seemed more spiritual than earthly. Had they not labored together for One whom both loved supremely? and had they not rejoiced together over many a poor wanderer brought into His fold? What beautiful sermons he had given them every Sabbath! But

his daily life of self-denying labor for the lost ones who flooded the great city was a better sermon still. Like the Divine Master, he sought "to seek and to save that which was lost." Then a look or a tone in the hour which had just gone by caused her heart to beat quicker and the color to rise in her cheek, but she checked herself resolutely.

"I will not think of anything so improbable," she said. "It is our work he is interested in, not me."

However, the young rector's visits became so frequent as to excite attention, and there was a look of serene happiness on his face. This was all accounted for later.

There was a pretty wedding which drew the crowds in the church where he ministered, and the bishop stood in his place.

Among the lovely flowers with which the church was decorated the young rector stood, and by his side was Agnes Darrow. Slowly and fervently the solemn marriage vows were repeated and the two were made one.

Then a snowy-haired gentleman standing near greeted the fair bride lovingly as "My dear daughter." He went with the happy pair to the modest home which had been prepared for their reception.

Since the death of her mother there had been in the young bride's heart an unsatisfied longing for home. The convent-school did not satisfy it, nor even the work of benevolence which gave her so much pleasure.

How her heart thrilled when Walter's father called her "dear daughter" in such a tone! And this was home. A friend of her mother's had volunteered to arrange all the details for her, and the simple elegance of the furnishing gave her sincere pleasure.

"Do you like our home, Walter?" she said, looking up into her husband's face.

"Do I, dearest? How can you ask? It seems like a glimpse of heaven to me."

"If we can persuade your father to stay with us I shall think so too," she said earnestly. "Please try your powers of persuasion upon him."

It was not a difficult task, for the sweet, restful home was so inviting after the chilly atmosphere of the boarding-house.

"But, my dear children, I hope you have not made a mistake," he said, "in asking a sad-hearted old man to share your happy home."

"No, indeed," Agnes answered brightly. "We are selfish in the matter, I assure you. We need you and you need us. Please let busi-

ness drop now ; and sometimes, when Walter is too busy, maybe you will go with me to help my poor people. It is such delightful work, and we are all so happy that you will not be sad-hearted any more."

CHAPTER XIX.

WALTER'S HOME—A TRAGEDY.

THE young wife's prophecy seemed to be fulfilled. The anxious, careworn look left Mr. Platte's face, and in the pleasant home, with every wish anticipated, the ex-banker, though only a cashier now, was as happy as he had been before adversity came to him.

A friend of his prosperous days, Col. Henshawe, was a near neighbor, and the friends spent many a happy hour together. Col. Henshawe often invited the rector's family to ride, and after one of these drives in the park he called on his old friend.

"I hope Mrs. Platte is well after her drive?" he said.

"Quite well," his friend assured him, "though she was a little shaken. That Jehu of yours is enough to shake up older heads than hers."

"I am so sorry," the Colonel replied. "I did not dare to check him, for I saw he had been drinking. He was very impudent when I reproved him after we had reached home, and I

have discharged him. Poor Tom! He is the best servant I ever had when he is himself, but whiskey makes a demon of him."

"Too bad," said Mr. Platte; "but whiskey often affects people that way."

"I do not dare trust my family with a drunken driver," Col. Henshawe said with a troubled look on his face, "and I don't feel quite easy about Tom. He looked very black when I told him that I should need his services no longer, and said:

" 'Dem hosses knows me, and no one else can drive 'em.'

" 'Yes,' I said, 'but you can never drive them again unless you let whiskey alone.'

" 'I's just as good right to drink whiskey as you has to drink wine,' he answered, and that settled the matter."

"This drink question confronts us everywhere," said Mr. Platte. "I had to settle it long ago when I found I must give up wine or see my son a drunkard."

"You, Hal! I am amazed," said Col. Henshawe.

"True, nevertheless. Then and there I became a total abstainer, and—it was time, for I had no idea that the rosy god had begun to coil his chains about me."

Col. Henshawe sat silent for some time, then shaking himself, he said :

“ I cannot account for the horrible depression which comes over me when I think of Tom. I have always treated him well. I am not obliged to keep him when I cannot trust him.”

“ Certainly not,” said Mr. Platte, “ and I would not think of him now,” and he changed the conversation, and Tom for the moment was forgotten.

Late that evening Tom presented himself at the Henshawe mansion and demanded to be reinstated. Col. Henshawe saw that he was too much intoxicated to listen to reason, and sent for a policeman. A fine young fellow, who had only been in the service for a year, came and attempted to arrest him. Tom resisted fiercely, and at last drew a dirk and stabbed the young policeman to the heart.

There was a sensational item in the morning papers, and, a few days later, an immense funeral in the home in the country where the murdered policeman had been taken, and the busy world went on.

The terrible tragedy was not forgotten by all, however. The rum-crazed murderer had full time for remorse before he met the just reward of his crime. But the men who fitted him for

the work of death went on with their deadly business.

"No home is safe," said Walter Platte indignantly. "The murderous traffic is licensed by law, and all we can do is to care for the wounded and gather up the dead."

A letter from Willie was a welcome relief from the gloom.

"You are to have another daughter," he said to Mr. Platte, "and I am requested to tie the indissoluble knot."

A wedding never loses its interest, and Agnes was eager to see her new sister, the "little Sunshine," of whom she had heard so much.

It was to be a quiet affair, with only the nearest relatives invited, "which includes Aunt Amelia, of course," Willie had written.

"That will be delightful, for I know her already," said Agnes, "and we will bring her home with us, Walter. We'll convince her that duty lies in this direction for a few months, at least, and then she will be sure to come."

"She will be persuaded," said Walter, smiling.

This little wife of his had such a winning way. Who could resist her?

Jamie, who was well known to them all, was of the party which was set down at the Harmon cottage the evening before the wedding.

"We are all here on a predatory excursion," said Mr. Platte, laughingly, as he took Mrs. Harmon's extended hand. Then turning to Agnes, he said, "this is our first captive," and, kissing Rose's blushing cheek, "this will be my second daughter. I am not a poor man, after all."

"How gay father is this evening! It is a pleasure to see him so happy," said Walter to his young wife.

The coming of Aunt Amelia soon after, seemed to fill the cup of enjoyment.

These strangers were "so well known to each other," they assured each other, and Agnes said to her husband:

"I hope that Willie is not greatly changed. I remember him well."

"But he is, my dear," he answered, "and for the better, too," an assertion which the young wife did not understand.

When the young gentleman arrived he had not forgotten his old playmate, and greeted her as sister warmly. But the kindly greeting of all his friends did not move him as much as the simple, "I am glad to see you, Willie," of the tall, graceful girl who was still to him "little Sunshine."

The bridal day was perfect, and in the flower-

bedecked parlor, which had witnessed so much of joy and sorrow, the irrevocable vows were spoken.

"Mine now and forever," whispered the young man as he kissed Rose's blushing cheek.

The bride in her simple travelling dress wore the same bright look which had won for her the sunny sobriquet long ago, and the handsome young man beside her, with the beauty of his early years, had a look which gave intense pleasure to those who knew him best.

"He can claim the promise, 'To him that overcometh,'" soliloquized Walter as he noted the new masterful look on his brother's face.

He did not know that the highest office in the gift of the people had been thankfully declined by the popular young lawyer, whom they never had suspected of the fatal weakness which led him to seek a home among them.

The time was too brief for all the congratulations and kind words which were crowded in when the ceremony was over, but the young lawyer had time to say to Aunt Amelia :

"I am glad for your work, dear aunt. Teach the children. Persuade them to choose the right path at the beginning, and they will be spared such a life-struggle as I have had."

"Thank God, you are a victor," said Aunt Amelia.

“Yes, if He had not helped me, I never could have conquered. He and His servants who made righteous laws. I am proud of our Western people. They do not fear to vote as well as pray for the right. And some day you will visit us and help Rose to commence a work like yours.”

“I did hope you would have remained with us for a few days, at least,” said Mrs. Harmon.

“Business engagements will not permit,” he said, “and we shall soon hope to see our mother in our home.”

The carriage for the travellers was waiting, and they drove away amid tears and smiles and showers of “that ridiculous rice,” as Rose said to her husband.

“He is a grand man, that brother of yours,” said Agnes, when the family party were gathered once more in the parlor. “I hope they may be very happy, but I do not like his plotting to coax your father away. I am sure we can never spare him.”

“You are kind to say so, my daughter,” said Mr. Platte. “You cannot know how restful your home is to one who has been so long homeless; but some day we may all visit the dear ones in their Western home.”

“Think of a forlorn bachelor,” said Jamie, “who is threatened with a like fate. This dear

home has been twice desolated, and plots are laid to leave it quite forlorn."

"Have no fears, my dear boy," said Mrs. Harmon. "Your mother will not forsake you until you, too, have a home. My children's letters will be my chief pleasure, and, when you, my friends, take a summer outing, you will always be welcome at Harmon cottage."

The travellers made a brief call on Anna, who had not been able to be with her sister on the momentous occasion. They were warmly welcomed to her luxurious home. But was this Anna? and was she changed? Could the glamour of riches and the demands of the new circle which she had entered, move the brave young heart which had never faltered amid the fiercest storms of adversity?

"So Willie and 'little Sunshine' have entered the race together," Mrs. Brown said laughingly as she welcomed the travellers. "But you will win more than fortune, I trust."

"If we do not, we shall make a failure," said the young lawyer. "I do not forget my early teaching, and now that I must be one of the workers, life seems richer than before, especially since now I shall always have sunshine."

His words carried Anna's thoughts rapidly backward, and she said musingly; "Those were

happy days. I am sure the workers are happiest, but tell me about the dear ones in the old home. Will I ever see them all again? What a strange, changing world it is!"

When the quiet home in the Western city was at last reached, the young husband said, as he glanced at its modest furnishing, "I hope you will not be disappointed Rose. It is quite unlike the palace home of your sister." She answered earnestly, "I am so glad. We shall be so much happier, for it will only be our resting-place, you know. It is a changing world, but—is Anna changed? or is it I?"

"It is an indisputable fact," said Mr. Platte quietly, "that the best and strongest people are influenced by their surroundings. Environment means a great deal to us. Who was it said, 'I am a part of all which I have met,' and Rose dear, the prayer of the wise man is mine, 'give me neither poverty nor riches.'"

The young lawyer's wife found in the growing Western city a broad field of usefulness which she was not slow to enter. She became an acknowledged leader, not in fashionable dissipation, but in all sweet charities which seem the peculiar province of woman. The prolific source of the crime and wretchedness which she had seen in her Eastern home was here under ban. A

strong prohibitory law was in force, but she said to her associates, "We will not forget that 'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty,'" and all listened to the voice of their talented young leader. A flourishing Loyal Legion was organized and in successful operation before the first visit of Aunt Amelia to her Western friends.

Rose had the warm co-operation of her husband in all her plans, and he was prouder of her tact in drilling and organizing her young temperance army, than of the beautiful paintings, the work of her leisure hours, which adorned their pleasant home.

"I cannot understand, my dear Mrs. Platte, how such an artist as you, can spend your time in instructing children," said a friend to her who was examining her fine collection of paintings.

Rose's face flushed brightly. She loved art, and appreciation is always pleasant.

"If I confess to you," she said with an arch smile, "that I have a boundless ambition, you will be greatly shocked."

"By no means, my dear. That is the only thing you lack. To think of one who is capable of such work as that," pointing to a beautiful landscape as she spoke, "wasting her time over children. It is almost wicked."

“As I was about to confess,” said Rose quietly, “from my childhood I have had a boundless ambition. We may impress, we do impress, lessons, pictures on the hearts of childhood which are never effaced; which affect all their future lives and—eternity. So you see I am ambitious, and try to paint on immortal canvas.”

The gay lady grew grave. Memory was busy. Was it from her lack of faithfulness that her two boys had gone astray?

“There is something in that,” she said at last. “And you who have no children, who have such wonderful skill as an artist, give your time to any poor child who needs you. I must say that you have made some beautiful pictures since you came among us. The children are so changed, they have something nice to think about, and I will not forget the lesson.”

As the years rolled swiftly by, and the echo of children's voices was heard in the Western home Rose did not give up her loved work, and the occasional visits of Aunt Amelia, who, as national organizer, gave her whole time to the work of the Legions, was a pleasure and an inspiration.

“People look upon our work as very trivial,” she said to Rose, “but the children of to-day will be the rulers to-morrow, and if they are

only well grounded in temperance principles all will be well."

She brought tidings from Walter's happy home in New York. He now gave his entire services to the hordes of "home heathen" which swarmed in the lower part of the city, and the details of his work were more thrilling than romance. His lovely wife entered with enthusiasm into all his plans for uplifting humanity, and often entertained large parties of his pupils from the mission schools, to whom the refined hospitality of the loved minister's home was like the Sermon on the Mount. On these occasions Agnes Platte was the charming hostess, who devoted herself to the entertainment of the shyest and most awkward of her guests.

The refreshments were ample and rich, the flowers beautiful, the amusements innocent and varied, and at the close there was always a short reading from "the best of books" and an earnest prayer that each one of the guests might, after life's toiling was over, be received into the heavenly mansions.

"Your father, Willie," said Aunt Amelia, "that once fastidious brother of mine, says that 'half the Christians in the world know nothing of the secret of enjoyment.' He often gives an

entire evening to entertaining Walter's humble guests, and enjoys it fully."

"The secret of this, Aunt Amelia," said Rose softly, "is fellowship with God. When we are doing His work, working with Him, no matter how humble the work may be, we are happy."

"You are right, little Sunshine," said her husband fondly. "You learned the secret long ago."

The successful lawyer, who stood so high in the regard of the citizens, who might have represented them in Congress, had he not utterly refused to accept the nomination, had learned a secret too—that a happy and successful life may be lived by one who had made a sad mistake in choosing his path at the beginning; and many mistakes and failures along the way.

The One Almighty and Eternal Friend, who had so patiently borne with his follies, who had given him the friend and helper he needed, had also given Himself.

He had come to know the significance of that word, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Here it was the beginning and the ending. Trusting Him he was happy and at rest, for he leaned securely on the Arm of Strength.

